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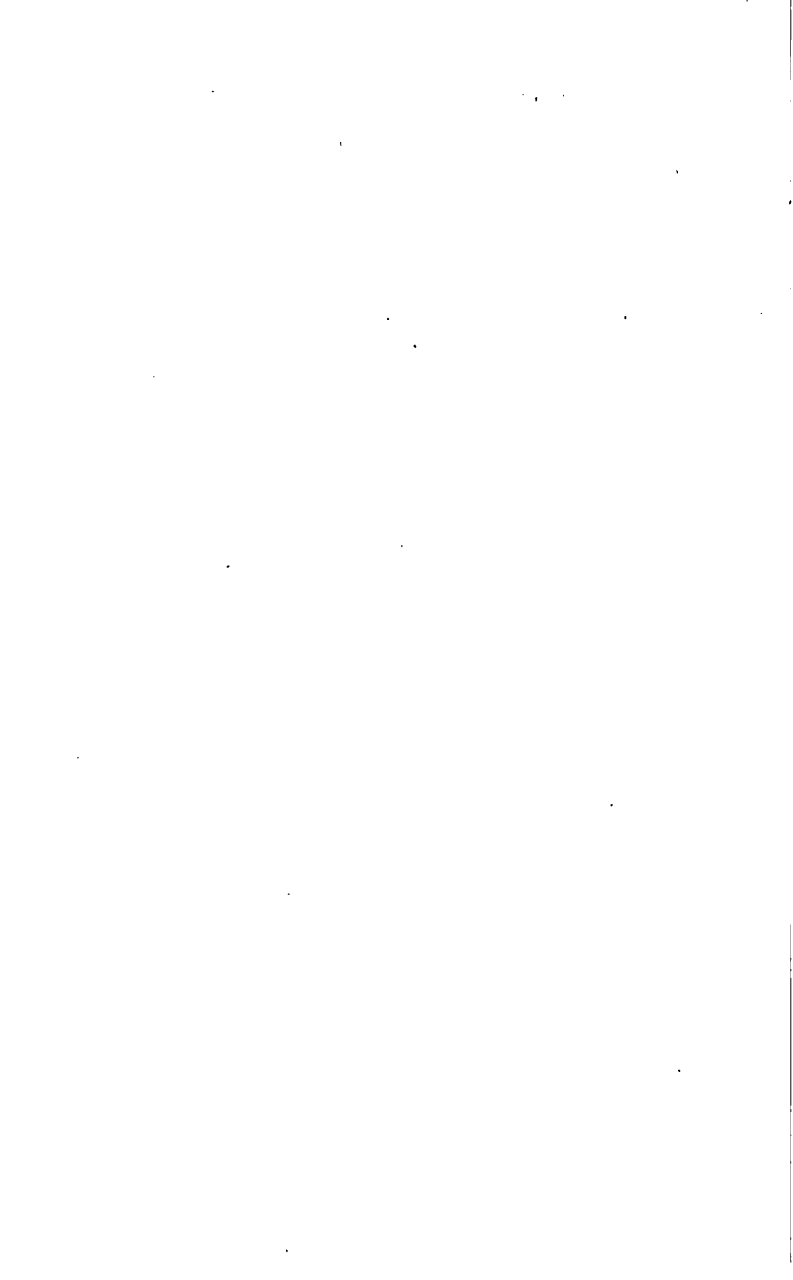
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*Neville Forbes*

THE

DEATH OF IVAN THE TERRIBLE.

A Tragedy

IN FIVE ACTS.



THE DEATH  
OF  
IVAN THE TERRIBLE.

*A Tragedy*

IN FIVE ACTS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN OF COUNT A. K. TOLSTOI,  
(WITH THE AUTHOR'S PERMISSION,)

BY

I. HENRY HARRISON.



LONDON:  
F. BOWYER KITTO, BISHOPSGATE WITHOUT. E.C.

1869.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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INSTEAD of troubling the reader with a Preface of apology and explanation, I shall attempt a brief historical sketch, which may, perhaps, assist him in forming a judgment of the Play. In doing so, I shall keep chiefly in view the person and character of Ivan The Terrible, and shall avoid many details that would find their place in a fuller historical account.

After the Mongol era, the strength of which lasted during the greater part of the thirteenth century, Moscow had gradually risen into importance, and the grandfather and father of Ivan, Ivan III. and Vasilii III., had put an end to that ruinous division of the country into separate and independent principalities, which, after being the chief cause of the success of the Tartars, had survived their fall. When Ivan IV. mounted the throne, at the age of three years, in 1533, his dominions were very far from being of the extent which we now associate with the name of Russia, and on all sides were surrounded by active

enemies. On the south the Crimean Khans were troublesome neighbours, continually breaking over the frontier to ravage, burn, and slay, and the Little Russians, known at Moscow as Tcherkasses, used to plunder the caravans that journeyed to Moscow. On the west the Kings of Poland, and the Teutonic Knights of Livonia, were ever ready for war. On the east the Tcheremèes and Nogay Tartars were ever breaking out, and Mahometan Princes, the enemies of the Greek Church, ruled in Kazan and Astrachan. Sweden, on the north west, often threatened the security of the Muscovite kingdom. Nor was the internal position of the kingdom better. Robbers ravaged all the plains washed by the Volga, and half-savage Kozacks wandered along those of the Don. Internal commerce and communication were impeded by the want of roads and by heavy customs duties. The people were universally robbed and oppressed by the Boyars, the Nobles, and the Dignitaries set over them by the Government. Manners and morals were at a low ebb. Composition by fine for murder was openly practised, while every festival led to some occasion for it; prisoners of war, on all sides, were sold as slaves; every fire—and fires were frequent, for the largest towns were chiefly of wood—was a scene of robbery. Famine, and plague, and contagious sores year after year swept off incredible numbers of the

population. In 1552, in Novgorod and round it, died 279,594 souls, and in 1553, at Pskoff alone, 25,000 men. A very interesting work, written by Ivan's Confessor and counsellor, the Priest Sylvester, gives us a clear idea of the position of the Russian woman of that day. Sylvester says, in his "Household," that women should be housekeepers, always working, and never talk of anything but housekeeping, and that the husband should correct his wife's faults by a beating administered with kindness. The art of printing had not yet found its way into Russia, and all that could be called literature consisted of Sacred Books, mostly in the Slavonic dialect, and a few Chronicles, in which historical events were mingled with fables and legends. Education among the people there was none, few of the Boyars could sign their names; and, notwithstanding the efforts of Vasili III. to encourage intercourse with foreigners, Russia was almost isolated from the rest of Europe. Novgorod and Pskoff were then the towns most known for their trade and their craftsmen, but a general want of skilled workmen was felt throughout all Russia.

Such was the kingdom to which Ivan succeeded. Can it be surprising that, under such circumstances, in the sixteenth century, in a country whose civilization was less developed than that of Saxon England in the tenth, an infant, born to all the flattery and

dangers of a throne, should become a tyrant, and earn the name of The Terrible? However well that name was deserved, it is more surprising to find a period in that infant's after life when he was the benefactor of his people, the guardian of his country's welfare, her regenerator, and her idol. It is a strange fact that the worst tyrant to whom the history of Russia can point, should be remembered in the traditions of his people, more as the lawgiver and consolidator of his empire, the civilizer who established the bases of her civic privileges and laws, the hero who put an end to three Mongol empires, than as the torturer of his nobles and the exterminator of his subjects. Such is, nevertheless, the fact, and it is explained by the double nature of the man, due to his natural gifts and many high qualities, and the evil effects of an education that must have brutalized a far higher nature than his. This contrast in the character of Ivan is well sustained in the Play of Count Tolstoi, and is corroborated by his diametrically opposite conduct in the two distinctly opposed periods of his reign.

Ivan really began to reign only in 1547, in which year he was crowned and married to Anastasia. He was then eighteen. During the first five years of his minority his mother Elèna, and her favourite Telepneff, had governed the country. After her death the chief power resided in the Council of the Boyars. The two

princely houses of Shouïski and Belski alternately replaced each other as the leaders of the Council, and during the whole period each victory in the constant struggle was followed by the most cruel vengeance on the losers ; to be murdered or starved in prison was usually their fate. The uncles of the young Tzar were among the victims of the jealousy of his mother and of the factions of the Boyars. The only eminent man of that time who possessed any generosity, honesty, or honour was Ivan Belski, and he paid with his life the imprudence of not using like the rest the hour of victory to exterminate his foes. It may be supposed that, in such an atmosphere of intrigue and crime, but little was done for the education of the young Prince. Even Ivan Belski gratified all his whims : he was accustomed to noisy games and the chase as his chief pursuits ; encouraged to rush into the streets and knock over women and old men ; and allowed to amuse himself by throwing tame animals down the palace steps. After such exploits the rough Boyars would praise him for his boldness. His early favourites, Telepneff, Belski, and Vorontzoff were snatched from him and done to death, his tears being either laughed at or disregarded. He was ten years old when Vorontzoff, at a meeting of the Council in the palace, was torn from his arms by the Shouïskis and nearly killed in his presence. The Boyars treated him with a brutal

roughness, and an utter want of respect, especially the Shouiskis, who would lounge with their feet on a sofa in his presence. He was ever surrounded by a crowd of idle companions, who were taught to flatter him, give way to his every whim, and lead him into riotous mischief. He was diverted by buffoons and bear baiting, and indulged early in every physical excess. His heart was hardened, his morals uncared for, if not purposely corrupted, his manners brutalized, and his mind uninformed, unless a verbal acquaintance with Sacred Books, and a knowledge of ancient and Russian history, can be supposed a sufficient culture. Above all, he was accustomed to cruelty, and to disregard the feelings of others. As he grew older, he hated and despised all around him. The first exercise of his authority was certainly an act of justice in itself, but it was at the instigation of a faction; it was illegally compassed, and needlessly cruel. When he was thirteen he was induced to assemble the Boyars, and arbitrarily condemn Prince Andrew Shouiskis to punishment. The Prince was torn by dogs in the street. He had well merited punishment, but he was condemned without a trial, by one who had no legal rights as a minor to judge him. He was punished not for his crimes, but because a boy and his advisers hated him.

Ivan had received from nature strong passions, a

powerful imagination, and a mind more acute than profound. He was capable of great and noble actions, but he had never been taught mastery over himself. He was through life fond of exercising the gift of eloquence which he possessed, and fond also of writing long letters full of quotations from the Sacred Books, of which till his death he remained a diligent reader. He was only ten years of age when his letter, to the leaders of the army then defending the capital against the Khan, caused them to forget their differences and march to victory, and when his speech and bold conduct in the Council roused both the Boyars and the people to preparations for the defence of Moscow. Karamzin thus describes his personal appearance :—  
“ He was tall of stature, well-built, high-shouldered, broad-breasted, had long hair and a full moustache, a Roman nose, and small grey eyes that were bold, piercing, and fiery.”

From the time that Ivan punished Prince Shouïski, the Glinskis ruled in his stead. In the year of Ivan's marriage, Moscow was nearly destroyed by a succession of fires : the Tzar fled to the hills of Vorobiðff, and the people broke out in revolt. This event, however, caused an entire change in Ivan. The Priest Sylvester sought him out, and bitterly reproached him with his neglect of all the duties of a sovereign. The good Priest was seconded by Anastasia. Ivan openly



confessed his fault in allowing the injustice and oppression of the Boyars, publicly asked his people's pardon, and promised to protect them for the future. The Glinskis were deprived of the power they had abused, but there were no cruel punishments. A new era now set in, which lasted twelve years, till the fall of Sylvester after the death of Anastasia. The change was sudden, but it was entire ; and, that it may be seen what the young Tzar had already threatened to become, I will relate his treatment, the year of his marriage previous to the fires, of a deputation that came to complain of the Governor of a District. The Tzar would not listen to them ; raged against them ; shouted and stamped ; poured hot wine over them ; singed their beards and hair ; and had them stripped naked and placed on the ground. Sudden news of the fall of a great bell at Moscow alone saved them from death. It is impossible not to admit Ivan's own argument to the assembled Clergy three years later. He described the sufferings of the *widowhood* of Russia, during his orphanhood and youth at first innocent and then dissipated. He spoke with tears of the death of his uncles, and of the disorders of the Boyars, whose bad example had corrupted his heart. He prayed all men to forget the past. The following from a sovereign of twenty-one, educated as he had been, promised much for the future. He called on the Clergy to help him,

and not to spare his sins, but to reproach his weakness :  
“ Thunder in mine ears the voice of God, and my soul shall live.”

During the twelve years which the change wrought by Sylvester lasted, Ivan was truly the father of his people. He protected them from the oppression of the Boyars, and gave them the right of electing Elders and others, who both in the towns and districts had authority independent of the Nobles. He introduced a new code with many beneficial changes, he regulated many abuses in the Church, and he did more than had ever been done before him for education. He strove to develope commerce and to connect Russia with the rest of Europe. He protected the introduction of printing, he encouraged foreign workmen to settle in Russia, and, above all, he himself minutely superintended the administration of justice. He sent his secretaries all over Russia to see that his intentions were strictly carried out, and, choosing them for personal merit out of the lower ranks of the priests and the people, he forced the pride of his Waywodes and Boyars to bow before these messengers of his will and his justice. He could not altogether eradicate the evils of those continual disputes about place and precedence which had so long prevailed to the public detriment, but he did much to alleviate the evil by introducing the custom of “not counting places” when

the exigencies of the public service brought one of a higher into contact with one of a lower rank. The activity which he displayed is incredible. The number of petitions sent to him on all possible matters, and of which he invariably personally disposed, is beyond account. His private life was no less altered than his public conduct; the palace became a model household for the whole kingdom. He chose his chief counsellors well: they were Sylvester and Adasheff. Sylvester never held any very high dignity, but Adasheff was placed in the Council, and became the Tzar's mouthpiece for foreign affairs. It was during this happy period of his reign that he conquered Kazan.

I shall not attempt to enter into the details of Ivan's administration; it would be beyond my present purpose: but, to prove that the account I have given is not exaggerated, I will quote the evidence of eye-witnesses, of our own countrymen, who were attached to the English commercial company that Ivan so warmly welcomed. They wrote of him that he was "condescending to his subjects, and affable, and loved to talk to them, often gave them dinners in the palace, and, notwithstanding, knew how to be their master: He says to a Boyar, 'Go,' and the Boyar runs. There is no nation in Europe more devoted than the Russians to their Sovereign, whom they equally fear and love. Ever ready to listen to com-

plaints, and to help, Ivan goes himself everywhere, and decides all. He has but two ideas,—how to serve God, and how to destroy the enemies of Russia.”

It was in 1558 that Anastasia died, when Ivan was twenty-eight years of age ; but, in order to understand the sudden change that followed, we must go back a little. In 1553 Ivan fell ill of a fever, and his life was despaired of. He assembled the Boyars round his bed, and called on them to take an oath to his son Demètri, an infant who died shortly after. They all refused his repeated requests, except Zachàrin-Yoùreff and a few more. Zachàrin was one of those who had most to expect from Demètri's succession, being brother to the Tzaritza, but he appears to have acted from disinterested motives. Vladimír Andréitch, Ivan's cousin, almost openly intrigued for the succession, and most of the Boyars favoured his claims. Both Sylvester and Adasheff appear to have had a leaning towards Vladimír. Adasheff pleaded to Ivan that the Boyars feared the government of Demètri's uncles. There was an evident purpose of setting aside the Tzar's son in favour of his cousin. Ivan recovered, and acted as if it had passed from his mind ; but it could not be expected that he should forget or forgive it. He treated Vladimír with honour and apparent kindness ; but his vengeance sixteen years later showed what he had really felt, while Vladimír in the interval

had done nothing to incur his anger. Henceforth he was ever impatient of the ascendancy of Sylvester and Adasheff, and this feeling was shared by Anastàsia, who could not forgive those that had been willing to spoil her son of his inheritance. Another circumstance contributed to embitter Ivan's mind against his favourites and the Boyars. He went to return thanksgivings for his recovery at the Monastery of Cyril on the White Lake. On the journey he saw a former Bishop, one Bassiànus, who had been a favoured counsellor of his father. This man hated the Boyars, who had compassed his worldly ruin, and did his best to stir up the Tzar against them, telling him "to have no counsellor wiser than himself." Kourbski, who knew Ivan, and who has left valuable historical records, ascribes much of the evil that followed to the influence of this crafty advice. While Ivan was thus ripe for throwing off the restraint of the guidance under which he had accomplished so much, and still dreamed only of showing that he could reign alone, the link that bound him to virtue snapped. Anastàsia died. The blow was fatal. It was his love for Anastàsia that had chiefly strengthened the remorse he felt when Sylvester showed him the ashes of his capital which he had abandoned in the hour of need. It was his love for Anastàsia that had strengthened remorse into effective repentance, that inspired him with the wish

to distinguish himself as the regenerator of his people. His illness had loosened his friendships, and made him suspect his counsellors, and they still continued to decide boldly for him. His growing coldness was observed; flatterers told him they were hypocrites; and while he, in the despair of his loss, was meditating forgetfulness of it in debauch, Sylvester ever required from him moderation even at table. Such a struggle could not last long. Adasheff and Sylvester retired from the Court within two years after Anastasia's death, and were soon after accused of having caused it by magic, and condemned without a hearing.

Riotous games, dissipation, and drinking now again prevailed at Court. All Adasheff's friends were ruined and banished, and Ivan began that series of bloody punishments of which Karamzin has detailed six different eras in his reign. An imprudent word was punished by death, and Prince Obolenski was the first of the numerous victims whom Ivan murdered with his own hand. Prince Repneen, seeing Ivan drunk in a mask among buffoons and revellers, asked him with tears if it became a Tzar to be a buffoon, and he was killed shortly after, by Ivan's order, while praying at the altar. Ivan was sensible of his turpitude. He would at times bewail his sins, and speak of resigning his crown, and seeking repentance in the Monastery of Cyril.

Eight days after Anastasia's death, Ivan announced his intention of seeking another wife, but it was not till the third year after that he married again. His new bride was an Asiatic, and half a savage, and the little influence she possessed was exerted for the worse : she encouraged his excesses and his cruelty. His Nobles now began to desert him, and among the rest, Kurbski fled into Livonia. Several letters passed between Ivan and him, and their nature may be gathered from the Play itself, which faithfully renders their correspondence. In 1564, the agitation of Ivan's mind made him retire to Alexandroffski Sloboda, and he intended to abdicate. At the prayers of the Clergy and the Boyars he returned, but on condition that the Clergy should not remonstrate against his punishment of traitors. The next year not a hair was left on his head, from the turmoil of his passions and his remorse.

He now formed the Opritchina, a regiment of body guards, who for seven years were the terror of Russia. The word means exceptional, privileged. They all took an oath of blind obedience to the Tzar, and they were rewarded with large estates, and the privilege of robbing and oppressing, nay, of slaying the people at their will. They rode with dogs' heads and brooms at their saddles, to show that they would bite the Tzar's enemies and sweep Russia. Ivan, after a revel,

would mount his horse, call his Opritchina round him, and sally forth to dishonour women, torture men, and burn and rob. These troops were beyond the reach of any law, and the following was a common practice among them when they ran short of funds for their extravagance and debauchery. They concealed one of their servants in a merchant's or a Noble's house, and then went with the police to find their pretended runaway thrall. The victim, on the plea that he had given shelter, either paid a large sum or was publicly flogged.

Ivan henceforth lived chiefly at Alexandroffski Sloboda, for he did not think himself safe at Moscow. The place, which had become a town, was surrounded by troops, and no one could leave or enter without the Tzar's special order. There he led the life of a monk. He chose three hundred of the Opritchniki for his *brothers*; he himself was their Abbot, Skouratoff was the bell-ringer. They wore cassocks over their brilliant court dresses. Ivan's time passed in devotion and the study of sacred books. His forehead bore the marks of his fervent prayers. This strange life was diversified by evening debauches, and by periods of punishment, during which his most faithful servitors perished by cruel deaths. His cousin Vladimir, with his wife and children, under pretence of having suborned a cook to poison him, were forced



to drink poison in his presence, and he stood by to watch their dying agonies. As his tyranny grew more uncontrolled, so did his suspicions augment, and he actually wrote to Elizabeth asking her to give him an asylum if revolt should drive him into exile. Much as he was feared, however, he had in reality nothing to fear himself. The conspiracies which he punished existed only in his own fevered imagination. The nation did not even hold him responsible for his crimes : they looked upon his tyranny as a proof that God was wrath with them for their sins. Ivan in their eyes was but the instrument. A Boyar, who was impaled, never ceased, for twenty-four hours, to call on God to pardon the Tzar. A Waywode, who came to speak to him while at table, had his ear sliced off by Ivan's knife, and, without moving a muscle, wished the Tzar long life, and thanked him for the mildness of the punishment.

In 1569 his cruelty reached a point little short of madness. The towns of Novgorod and Pskoff were disliked by him, because they still retained a remembrance of their independence and a traditional ill-will to Moscow. There were still living witnesses of the last Vétch, or national assembly, at Pskoff; at Novgorod they still talked of past victories over the Muscovite. Tver had been an independent principality, but in that province there reigned none even of that

harmless jealousy which animated the townsmen of Novgorod the Great and of Pskoff. Ivan, however, resolved to exterminate the treason which his fears supposed. He marched with the Opritchina into the province of Tver, and caused them to ravage both towns and country. It was a scene of indiscriminate murder and pillage. He next went to Novgorod, and there for five weeks pillaged and destroyed the town and all the country round, tormenting, slaying, and drowning all classes alike. The victims numbered 16,000. Here, as at Tver, female honour was outraged wherever a woman was found, and neither the age nor infancy of either sex was spared. The Opritchniki, on this bloody raid, put to death every one they met on the road, that the Tzar's journey might remain secret ; and Skouratoff was despatched to murder in his cell Philip, the Metropolitan, who had been previously disgraced for having bravely reproached Ivan with his crimes. Pskoff, however, escaped. Ivan marched there with the intention of repeating his butcheries, but when he heard, the night before his entry into the town, from a neighbouring Monastery, all the bells of the churches in the town calling the population to prayers, his heart was touched, and the submission with which, on the morrow, the inhabitants of every house offered him bread and salt as he passed, is said to have turned his wrath aside.

On Ivan's return to Moscow the reign of terror continued. Instruments of execution and torture were erected on one of the public places, and on one occasion two hundred victims perished. Ivan sent his Opritchniki to force the people out of their cellars and hiding-places, that they might witness his justice. Skouratoff was the leading spirit of all these executions, and many of the most execrable acts of cruelty are ascribed particularly to him. This wretch met with an honourable death on the field of battle, and, though most of the Tzar's early favourites perished in their turn, he to the last was in favour at Court. Men were now roasted in stoves made for the purpose, they were flayed, their flesh was torn from them with pincers, and large strips were cut out the whole length of the spine.

Ivan, meanwhile, when not at his devotions, continued to delight in bearbaiting and buffoons. He would let loose a bear or two among the crowd who assembled, and always rewarded handsomely those who had been mangled, for the laughter they had afforded him. Those who jested with him often paid with their lives for an untimely joke, and after stabbing an offender he would continue the revel. The miseries of Russia were increased by plague and famine.

Worse, however, awaited the country. The con-

queror of Kazan had forgotten his early valour ; distrust so mastered him, that he would neither send his armies nor lead them himself against a foreign foe. In 1571 the Khan appeared before Moscow, and fired the town. The Kremlin alone escaped, and Karamzin relates that 800,000 perished in the flames. The Khan is said to have made 100,000 prisoners. The Tzar had fled ignominiously to Yaroslaff, and he ultimately acceded to dishonouring conditions. This, like all his disasters, was made the pretext for punishments. His doctor, one Boumelli, taught him another mode of despatching his victims : those whom he had doomed now perished by poison. Boumelli himself was ultimately burned at Moscow.

Vorotinski now saved Russia by defeating the Khan ; Lithuania and Poland were without a king by the death of Sigismund, and Ivan was for a time triumphant. He dissolved the Opritchina, but his punishments still continued, though, apparently through lassitude, on a somewhat smaller scale. It was about this period (1572) that Boris Godunoff began to rise in his favour. Godunoff was descended from one of the Tartar Moorzas, or Princes, who in the fifteenth century had assisted the great grandfather of Ivan, Vasili the Dark, so called from his having been blinded in the long civil war against his cousins. Many of these Princes had large territories and even towns assigned

them, and some of them embraced the Greek faith : among the latter class were the ancestors of Godunoff. The character of Boris is described by Karamzin exactly as Count Tolstoi has drawn it. Godunoff at first was merely one of Ivan's squires, but he soon obtained the intimacy of the Tzar, while contriving to take no part in his cruelties nor his debauches. At the third marriage of Ivan he was groomsman to the new Tzaritza, and when the Tzarévitch Feëdor married his sister, in 1580, he was made a Boyar. In 1578, one of those frequent quarrels about precedence arose between Godunoff and Prince Seëtski, and the Tzar decided that Godunoff was higher by many ranks. The losing party in such disputes was sometimes punished by imprisonment, and sometimes obliged, by way of humiliation, to go and stand in the court of his adversary's house till the latter came out, and, going with him to the Tzar, gave thanks for the judgment. It is to this latter form of sentence that Saltikoff makes allusion in the first scene of the Play.

Between the years 1571 and 1580, Ivan was married five times, his seventh wife being the Maria of the Play. Such repeated marriages were contrary to the canons of the Greek Church, and most of them were contracted without the consent of the Clergy. One of his wives appears never to have been styled Tzaritza, and on another occasion the whole ceremony

consisted of an oath taken by the parties. His last wife, however, was regularly wedded and acknowledged, yet, before her child was born, he was already negotiating for the hand of Lady Hastings. Hume says that that lady had too much care for her peace to consent, but Karamzin speaks of no objections on her part.

On the death of Sigismund, the crown of Poland was offered to Ivan, but he insisted on its being made hereditary, and Henry of Anjou was elected. Within a few months he fled from Warsaw to become Henry III. of France, and, after long contentions, Stephen Bathòry became king of Poland in 1576. The following year Bathòry began his victorious campaigns in Livonia, which, since the fall of the Teutonic knights, in 1561, had become the chief prize of Polish and Russian ambition. In a few months Bathòry had taken twenty-four towns: his success was ultimately stopped by the defence of Pskoff, and in 1582 the war closed by Ivan giving up Livonia. During this war Ivan sounded the very depths of degradation. He shut himself up in Slobòda, and wrote vaguely to his generals to act for the good of the country. Vacillation, weakness, and even cowardice, were shown by many of the Russian leaders. Disgraceful conditions of peace were accepted. The Tzar ordered his envoys to bear every insult, and even

to put up with blows. The national honour was further humiliated by the Swedes taking Narva, or Narõva, as it was then called. All this was borne with while Ivan was still at the head of armies amply sufficient to have maintained his former military fame. The people believed that he was under the influence of a magic charm. Stories have been handed down of voices in the air, and of stones falling from heaven with mysterious inscriptions on them.

In the midst of all this ruin and disgrace the punishments still continued, and at last Ivan completed his crimes by raising his hand against his eldest son. Ivan, the Tzarévitch, had been early accustomed to the same cruelty and debauchery in which his father wallowed, and promised to leave a name no less detestable. He had assisted his father in torturing and murdering his victims, and especially taken an active part in the horrors of Novgorod. He was not, however, without some good qualities: he was brave and self-reliant, showed considerable parts, and was animated by a generous love of fame. Patriotism was not dead in him. During the negotiations for the peace with Bathõry, indignant at the terms offered, and that the troops who might have saved his country should be idly watching the siege of Pskoff, roused probably by the heroism of Ivan Shouïski's defence, he went to his father and de-

manded that he should be sent to drive off the enemy. Ivan struck him in his rage, as described in the piece, and wounded Godunoff, who tried to restrain him. The Tzarévitch lived only four days. Ivan, when he saw his son's blood, gave way to the wildest remorse ; he sat for days beside the body without food or sleep. Karamzin thus describes the scene of the burial at Moscow :—" Void of all the signs of royalty, in a mourning dress, with the air of a simple and despairing sinner, he threw himself on the grave, on the ground, with a piercing cry." He would afterwards jump from his bed at night in terror, as if he saw some spectre, wander over the rooms of his palace, fall on the ground and roll there, shout and weep, and only cease from exhaustion. He intended to resign, and yielded, as described in the Play, to the entreaties of the Boyars. Will it be believed that he succeeded in quieting his conscience, and chiefly by giving large sums that masses might be read for the repose of his son's soul? The account given in the Play of the circumstances of his death agrees with history ; both the appearance of the Court and the prediction of the wizards are facts. One of his last occupations was to look over his treasures, and he died while playing a game of chess. The part taken by Godunoff in his death is due to the dramatist. His illness was of a fearful nature : all his flesh began



to putrify, and his whole body to swell. He had reigned fifty years. He died in 1584.

Karamzin gives the following summary of Ivan's character :—"He boasted of firmness over himself, because he could laugh aloud in the hour of fear and trouble ; of mercy and generosity, while bestowing on his favourites the fortunes of disgraced Boyars and citizens ; of justice, while punishing with equal delight for services and crimes : he boasted of the spirit of a king, and the upholding of royal honour, while ordering an elephant, sent from Persia to Moscow, to be killed because it would not bend its knee to him, and while cruelly punishing the unfortunate courtiers who dared to play better than their sovereign at chess or cards : he boasted also of profound wisdom in statecraft, while he systematically, at different times, rooted out whole families supposed dangerous to the royal power."

Karamzim, however, gives the reverse of the medal, and, as it would be too long to give it all, I have put together the leading points. In foreign policy he followed his grandfather Ivan III. He liked justice, often decided suits himself ; he punished those who oppressed the people ; never suffered drunkenness among them, only at Easter or Christmas ; and was no friend to gross flattery. He broke a stick to splinters over Prince Borateński, who lyingly pre-

tended that Bathòry trembled at his name. He was tolerant of all creeds but the Jewish, was fond of religious disputes, and suffered contradiction. He protected learned foreigners, and did much for education by establishing clerical schools, in which laymen were taught reading and writing, law and history.

It will be observed that Godunòff throughout Count Tolstoi's piece plays an important part, and that at the close he remains completely master of the situation. This agrees with his after career. During the whole reign of Feòdor it was Godunòff who governed Russia, and he governed justly and wisely. On Feòdor's death the dynasty of Rurick became extinct, and Godunòff was elected Tzar. His reign was not a happy one, for, jealous of the Boyars, he became a tyrant. During the reign of Feòdor the young Tzarevitch Demètri had been murdered at Ouglitch, and the crime is attributed to Godunòff, though no direct proofs exist. A man named Beetiagòffski was one of the assassins. Had Godunòff lived longer, he would have been deposed and murdered, as his son was, by an impostor calling himself Demètri. There was, after this, a long period of anarchy, during which another false Demètri arose: it ended with the elevation of the family of Romànoff to the throne.

Without some explanation the word Zemstvo will

probably not be understood by those who are unacquainted with the details of the administration in Russia. The word now represents Assemblies of the Rural Proprietors, being derived from Zemlià, land, earth. During the period of the Opritchina, the Tzar took to himself a large number of the most important towns, and a whole quarter of the capital: these were governed by his own specially appointed Dignitaries, and the rest of the country was called Zemstchina, and was governed by the Boyars, who sat in the Zemstvo, with whom the Tzar called to it the Okolnitchi, Dignitaries, Treasurers, and Secretaries, Nobles of the first and second degree, and even Poméstchiks (landed proprietors), and merchants. When the Opritchina was dissolved, in 1572, the Council of the Boyars again resumed their former functions, and the Zemstvo again became a Provincial Assembly.

In conclusion, I have but little to say in my own behalf. The measure employed by Count Tolstoi I have fortunately been able exactly to render, for it is that of our ordinary blank verse. Perhaps, on the whole, the Russian is more strictly iambic, and there is a more frequent use of the redundant final syllable. The Play has an admirable mixture in the original of archaic forms. I shall, perhaps, be criticised for the use of familiar terms, as when Ivan says, "A dream

that's nicked it," and when the Cornchandler exclaims, "Get out of that!" In using these expressions, I have certainly followed the Russian. In the last instance quoted it seems to me required by the nature of the scene, and as regards Ivan, though he was fond of high-sounding words and long eloquent speeches, when roused to anger he was short and coarse. I have retained the Russian patronymics, and given the names as nearly as possible according to the Russian forms, with a few exceptions, such as Boyar, but the word has been too long naturalized with an English plural for me to venture on Boyars. The Russian accent is often apparently so arbitrary to an English reader, that the names have been printed with accents. It will be observed that the patronymics are lengthened or shortened at pleasure, and that even names vary. For instance, the *eo* in Feodor is pronounced sometimes as one syllable, sometimes as two; in the latter case the accent has been placed on the *o*. Again, Maria is sometimes Maria and sometimes Mária.

ST. PETERSBURG, *March*, 1869.

## RULES FOR PRONUNCIATION OF RUSSIAN WORDS.

*i* like the English *ee*.

*a* and *o* broad, as in *father* and *pore*.

*è* or *é* like *a* in *fate*.

*ou* or *u* like *oo*.

*oui* form one syllable, sounded *oo*.

*ia* also form one syllable, with the consonant sound of *y* for *i*.

*ě* as *o* broad, with the sound of *y* before it, so as to form one syllable.

*j* like the consonant sound of *y*.

*sj* like *g* in *contagious*, but without the sound of *d*, that is, like the French *j* in *jardin*.

*x* as if the *ch* in *echo* were aspirated, and not with the sound of *k*.

*ch* has the sound given to *x*.

The different unaccented forms of the Russian plural are rendered by *i*.

## E R R A T A.

- Page xxvii, line 22—for "appearance of the *Court*," read "of the Comet."
- " 3, " 8—for "*are* eldest," read "art."
- " 9, " 5—Saltikoff speaks, not *Nagot*.
- " 24, " 13—for "*that thou art*," read "thou that art."
- " 26, " 18—for "No *Presbyterian* I," read "No *Presbyter* am I."
- " 27, " 11 & 14 for "*see'st*," read "seest."
- " 27, " 19—for "*to thee end*," read "to the end."
- " 81, " 1, in song, for "*gall*," read "pal."
- " 88, " 5—for "*Wizard*," read "Wizards."
- " 90, " 5—for "*forsake'st*," read "forsak 'st."
- " 95, " 18—for "*who took*," read "who to."
- " 99, " 13—for "*twain all*," read "turn all."
- " 124, " 9—for "*Were now*," read "Are now."
- 
- " 42, " 5—add *comma* after "with her."
- " 42, " 18—put *comma* for point after "easily."
- " 88, " 12—add *comma* after "A holy man that,"
- " 40, " 17 and 18—read { "thou thinkest,
- " 40, " 20 read—"B' my side, is't not? to blame . . ."
- Naturally, that for my guidance I."
- 
- For *Kúrbski*, read Kóúrbski, p. xviii.
- " *Pá'otsk*, read Pólotak, p. 24, 27, 71, 109.
- " *Ivánvitch*, read Ivánovitch, p. 60.
- " *Kiéff*, read Kléff, Act IV., Scene I.
- " *Smoleńsk*, read Smolensk, p. 71.
- " *Obolénski*, read Obolenski, p. 105.
- " *Fëdórovna*, read Fëdorovna, p. 57, 126.
- " *Fëdór Ivánovitch*, read Fëdór Ivánovitch, p. 144, line 2.
- " *Fëdór*, read Fëdór, { p. 55, line 9.
- p. 90, line 2; p. 97, line 7.
- p. 98, line 20; p. 100, line 6.
- p. 108, line 3, 4; p. 110, line 11.

### NOTE.

These errors have arisen through the impossibility of securing the author's corrections.

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**The Death of Ivan The Terrible.**

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THE  
DEATH OF IVAN THE TERRIBLE.

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"The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my majesty ?

"While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken ; The kingdom is departed from thee.

"And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field."—DANIEL iv: 30, 31, 32.

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PERSONS REPRESENTED.

The Tzar Ivàn Vasilevitch (Ivàn IV.)

The Tzaritza Maria Feddorovna, *born Nagoi, his seventh wife.*

The Tzarévitch Feddor Ivànovitch, *his son by his first wife.*

The Tzarèvna Ireèna, *wife of Feddor, sister of Godundoff.*

Prince Mstislàffski,

Zachàrin-Yotreff, *brother of the Tzar's first wife,*

Prince Shotiski,

Bèlski,

Prince Stcherbàti,

Prince Golitzin,

Prince Troubetskoi,

Prince Seètski,

Sheremètieff,

Tatèstcheff,

Saltikdoff,

Michael Nagdi, *brother of the Tzaritza Maria Feddorovna,*

Boris Godundoff, *brother-in-law of the Tzarévitch Feddor,*

Members of the Council of the  
Boyars.

Messenger from Pakoff.

Maria Gregòrevna, *wife of Godunòff,*

Gregòri Godunòff, *a relation to Boris,*

Gregòri Nagdi, *second brother of the Tzaritza*

*Maria Feddorovna,*

{ *Okòlmitchi (Officers of the palace attached to the person of the Tzar).*

Garàbourda, *Envoy of Stephàn Bathòry (King of Lithuania and Poland).*

Beetiagòffski,

Keèkeen, } *Nobles.*

Anchorite (*a hermit monk who has taken strict vows*).

Nurse of the Tzarèvitch Demètri (*the infant son of Ivàn by the Tzaritza Maria Feddorovna*).

Steward of the Kremlin Palace.

Steward of Alexandroffski Slobòda (*a country residence of the Tzar Ivàn*).

Steward of Godunòff.

1st Wizard.

2nd Wizard.

Elms,

Jacobi. } *Doctors.*

1st Preestaff,

2nd Preestaff, } *Officers of the Police of the time.*

Fool.

Butler.

The Chief of the Strelitzes.

The Centurion of the Strelitzes.

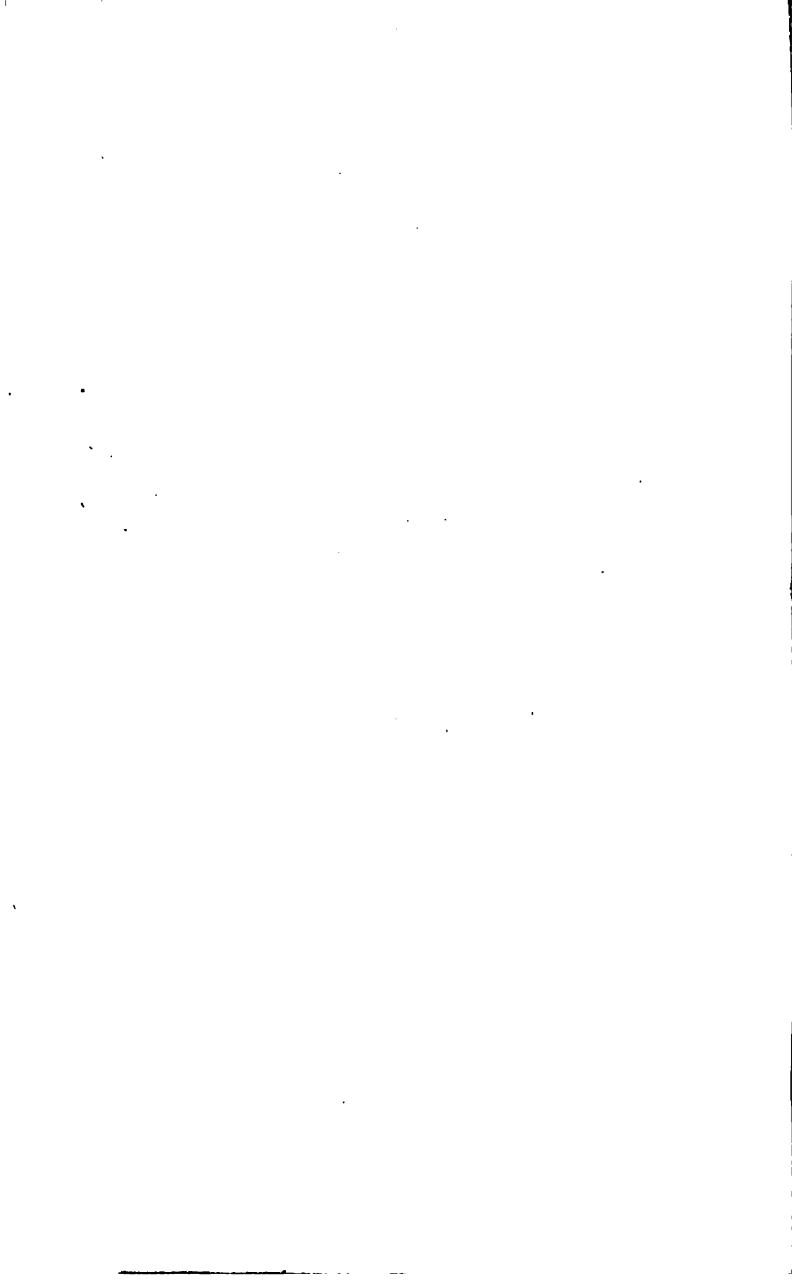
Stòlneek (*a Noble who waits at the Tzar's table*).

Cornchandler.

Servant of Prince Shoùiski.

*Boyers, Okòlmitchi, Body Guards, Strelitzes, People, Buffoons, Servants.*

*The scene is laid at Moscow, in the year 1584.*



THE

DEATH OF IVAN THE TERRIBLE.

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ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Before the curtain rises, noise and quarrelling heard on the stage. The Hall of the Boyars disclosed. On benches along the walls, arranged in the form of a room, are seated the Boyars. On the middle bench are Prince Mstislàffski, Zachàrin-Yoùreff, Bèlski, and the other elder Boyars; on the side-benches are the younger ones; at the end of the side-bench, on the left, to the front of the stage, sits Boris Godunòff; on the right, opposite Godunòff, Michael Nagòi, holding Saltikòff by the collar, is trying to pull him from his place.*

Nagòi. A Tzar's wife's brother I, no Saltikòff  
Shall have my place!

Saltikòff. Off, losel, off! The father  
Of him begat thee did my grandsire serve  
As trencherman and follower!

Nagòi. 'Tis false!  
A Saltikòff ne'er had a follower!  
Wast not clept Boyar, e'en that with Golitzin  
Didst Pòlotsk to the King surrender?

Golitzin.

No,

'Tis a lie! I but the outskirts guarded,  
And in the town itself held out Stcherbàti.

*Stcherbàti.* Well, what? Held out! And in that  
holding out

Within twelve days we seven assaults beat off,  
And, hadst thou standing kept within the suburbs,  
Succour from Sòkol had come up to us,  
And we had held in grasp the rear-caught King.

*Golitzin.* Am I to blame that during three whole  
days

The succour wrangled who should lead the march?

*(Nagòi continues to dispute with Saltikòff.)*

*Nagòi.* The Tzar's wife's brother I! I at the  
wedding

The cake of royalty did foremost bear.

*Saltikòff.* And I the dish whereon the golden  
goblet.

My father was Grand-Armourer; and thine,  
What was he? Great the honour that thou art  
By the seventh wife a brother to the Tzar!

*Nagòi.* My sister, the Tzaritza, scold her not.

*Saltikòff.* I do not scold her. Yet she is not less  
The seventh and not the first Tzaritza.

Go to, thou brother of a Tzar! Hast counted  
All the wives' brothers of our Tzar?

*Zachàrin.*

O, Boyars!

What are ye doing? Mind ye where ye are!

Unseemly thus to act !

*Nagòì.*

The Tzar precedence

And right of ancestry shall judge betwixt us.

*Saltikoff.* Go, plead to him, and he will make thee come  
To bow before me.

*Mstislàffski.*

O, Boyars, forbear !

Lo, I and Sheremètieff, higher than all,

Our places we dispute not.

*Several voices.*

Higher than we !

By what proof are ye so ?

*Zachàrin.*

Shame on ye, Boyars !

[*To Mstislàffski.*

Thou, Prince Ivàn Feòdoritch, are eldest—

Quiet them !

*Mstislàffski.* But, Boyar, how to quiet them ?

They 've all gone mad ! See, with a Mstislàffski

They count them peers ! Were it not well to bid

The Deacon bring our Rank-Book's register ?

*Zachàrin.* No time this, prince, for registers !

Hear, Boyars !

[*Steps forward.*

Have ye forgotten why that we are here ?

Is 't possible ? and thus ? At such a time,

E'en when hot from the murder of his son,

The Tzar is torn by his remorse, and when

He hath resolved to shut him from the world,

And through his second son, Feòdor, bids us,

By reason of his sickness, choose forthwith

The worthiest to his empire to succeed—  
When from all sides, meanwhile, the enemy  
Doth war upon the Russ—famine and plague around—  
At that same moment ye about your seats  
Are wrangling. Boyars, bethink yourselves !  
Now should we all stand steadfast, each for each,  
Aye ! nor let Russia perish ! Be ranks forgot !  
To our sad choice proceed we, self aside,  
And none count places !

*Bèlski.* Be it so, i'faith !

*All.* No places ! aye, no places !

*Zachàrin.* Prince Mstislàffski,  
Thou 'rt eldest—open thou the Council !

*Mstislàffski.* Boyars !

Ye all have heard what unto you just now  
Nikita Romànovitch hath said. Bitter  
Though be 't, the Tzar's will must we yield us to.  
Proceed we to the vote.

*Shoànski.* One moment, Boyar :  
Is that the last word of the Tzar ?

*Mstislàffski.* The last !  
In vain have we besought him. We were bid  
Our instant sentence to pronounce, and with  
The new Tzar come to him,

*Troubetskòï.* A fearful time !

*Golitzin.* 'Tis not to be believed !

*Mstislàffski.* Nor true I deemed it,

"Till, stamping with his foot at us, he gave  
Me order to assemble this our Council.

*Shoûiski.* If such be then his will, I say so be it !

*Stcherbâti.* Aye, Boyars ! if so, then are we powerless  
To thwart him.

*Sheremètieff.* Powerless we are, in truth !

*Tateèstcheff (an old man).* Come Easter it will  
then be twenty years,

That the great Tzar bethought him, just as now ;

Fain was he to fling off from him his throne,

And to Slobòda went forth out of Moscow.

To riot 'gan the people ; we resolved

On going in a body to the Tzar,

T' entreat him. And we went. He met us roughly ;

Naught would he hear at first, but in the end

He hearkened to our prayers, and, going back

To Moscow, took again to him his kingdom.

*Seètski.* Aye ! and formed th' Opritchina. We 've  
memories.

*Tateèstcheff.* Bring not again, O God, those fearful  
times !

But worse it had been still without the Tzar :

The people would have stoned us, and all Russia

Had been troubled ; the Tartars, and the Poles,

Aye, and the Germans, would have mastered us.

Amongst us then, agreement there was none.

*Seètski.* And now most enviably do we agree !



*Shouiski.* Where tends this speech of thine ?

[*To Tatestcheff.*

*Tatestcheff.*

To that,

E'en now perhaps, as once before it happ'd,  
The Tzar may be appeased.

*Mstislaffski.*

Nay, Boyar, nay,

The times have changed, and with them hath the Tzar,  
He hath grown slack in body and in spirit ;  
No mind against the Boyars turned as then :  
Remorse 'tis now that drives him from his throne.

*Belski.* He eats not, drinks not, long hath known  
no sleep ;

The parle, which he so secretly conducted  
With England's Queen, there is no speech of more ;  
Her Envoy begs an audience in vain.

*Zacharin.* Aye, he no longer is himself. Three  
weeks

Before that act of sin, a letter wrote he  
Unto the traitor, Kouïrski, bitterly  
Reproaching him, and answer he awaited  
From Lithuania, quivering in his wrath ;  
But now he naught remembers e'en of Kouïrski,  
And mild and merciful is he in speech.

*Shouiski.* 'Tis not for us the Tzar to guide. From  
God

His anger and his grace. How think ye, Boyars ?  
Proceed we to our choice ?

*All.*

Proceed ! Proceed !

[*A silence.**Mstislàffski.* Whom choose we, Boyars ?*Nagòì.*

Whom else

have to choose ?

If it needs must that we pass by Feòdor,

Whom else is there, if not the Tzar's own son,

Demètri Ivànovitch ?

*Mstislàffski.*

An infant ?

*Nagòì.* His mother, then, the Tzarìtza, what of her ?

If of my sister you make small account,

Name her a Protector.

*Saltikòff.*

Thyself, is 't not ?

*Nagòì.* Me, or my brother, 'tis the same ; we're both  
Demètri's uncles.*Saltikòff.*

And we want no uncles.

*Tateèstcheff.* God keep us from 't ! The nonage we  
remember

Of the Tzar Ivan. From the Tzar's uncles

May God deliver us !

*Shòùiski.*

Forbid it, heaven !

*Zachàrin.* Aye, God forbid ! We need a puissant  
Tzar,

And not a tutor o'er our king !

*Mstislàffski.*

In sooth !

Ivàn Vasilitch hath himself prescribed

That we should make our choice from out ourselves.

*Sheremètieff.* Then whom to choose?

*Stcherbàti.* Whoever be your choice,  
He needs to be of birth illustrious,  
That all may bow before him.

*Seètski.* Not so, prince!  
Let him that all outdoth in valour reign.  
We have not far to seek him. *Nikìta*  
*Romànovitch*, *Zachàrin* is before you!

[*Talking.*

By the imperial and blood-stained throne  
He thirty years hath stood, upright and spotless.  
By his bold words have thousand guiltless ones  
Been saved not once, when o'er their heads already  
Glittered the waving of the upraised axe.  
Himself he spared not. Death he ever looked  
Full in the eyes—and death, to us a marvel,  
His honoured head passed by and never touched.  
The course of his whole life is spread before you,  
Stainless as is the plain when clad in snow.

*Several voices.* *Zachàrin!* *Zachàrin!* *Nikìta!*  
*Romànovitch!* *Zachàrin* for our Tzar!

*Troubetskòì (to Seètski).* Who speaks 'gainst that?

A Boyar upright!  
None here dispraise him. For his services  
We honour render him; but his is not  
A princely house—and under him no place  
For us the posterity of Gèdimeen.

*Shoûiski.* Still less for us, of Rurick the descendants.

*Goltzîn.* No, he's no prince—'neath him befits us  
not !

*Saltikòff.* No prince, 'tis true, but to the Tzar allied.

*Nagdi.* Not he alone. *We* to the Tzar are kin.

The seventh wife's brother thou, the first's—Zacharin.

*Zachàrin.* For my sake, Boyars, be there no dispute.

I thank thee for the honour done, Prince Seètski.

[*Saluting several.*]

I thank you, also, Boyars, but I'd not

That honour have accepted, though ye all

Had wished for me, I'd still not taken it.

Boyars, a plain man I. God hath not given

To me the statecraft that should rule a kingdom ;

But if an honest counsel you would have,

There lives one who in right of ancestry

And services stands higher than us all.

The Boyar and the Waywode, Prince Ivàn

Petròvitch Shoûiski, that 'till now holds out

In Pskoff against the King Bathòry—

Lo, this man take,—one whom to bow before

To none can be a subject of offence.

*Sheremètieff.* Shoûiski ? Impossible ! With all his  
efforts

The fifth month still the king besieges Pskoff ?

And still the Waywode, Prince Ivàn Petròvitch,

To death holds out the town, and he hath kissed  
To that the Cross, and his Drousjina \* with him.  
God knows what time the siege may last ; while we  
One hour more cannot stay without a Tzar.

*Shoûiski.* Then what remains ?

*Mstislâffski.* Our way I see not, Boyars.

*Shoûiski.* The Tzar our answer waits : we must  
make end.

*Zachàrin (to Godunoff).* Boris Feðdoritch, why to  
this moment

Hast thou not uttered word ? In hardest pass  
Thou oft hast brought us out of harm. Say, then,  
What thinkest thou ?

*Godunoff (rising).* Must I, my second father,  
Must I speak now, when issue from this business  
In vain do seek the very best of you ?  
But if you will that I should speak my mind,  
Then, Boyars, I will say.....

*Several voices.*

Louder ! Louder !

We cannot hear !

*Godunoff.* I should have thought that, Boyars.

*Several voices.* We hear not ! Louder !

*Zachàrin.*

Why gottest thou a seat

So far behind, and lower than all, Boris ?  
Or know'st thou not thyself thy proper place ?

\* The Body-Guard of the Princes, formed of free warriors in their pay. The word is derived from "drouk," friend.

We cannot hear thee ! Come this way ; come nearer !

[*Takes him by the hand, and leads him to the middle bench.*]

Here is the place where thou shouldst rightly sit.

*Godunoff* (*bowing on all sides*). Ye, the great sons of mighty ancestors !

And thou, whom I my father call, Nikita

Romànovitch, my well-belovèd master !

I should not dare one word to utter here

If by yourselves I were not bidden speak.

*Saltikoff*. Whither off now ?

*Nagòr*. Wagging his tail, the fox !

*Saltikoff*. And got himself not less into the middle.

*Nagòr*. Fear not, he sat from modesty behind.

*Several voices*. Hush ! Silence ! Peace there ! Listen to Godunoff !

*Godunoff*. 'Tis known unto you all, illustrious Boyars,

What times have now on Russia roughest come :

The King Bathòry town after town takes from us ;

Now master of Ousviat, Velisj, and Pòlotsk ;

Veliki-Louki's walls are battered down,

And hallowed Pskoff, our ancient Russian city,

He hath with countless hosts assailed. Meanwhile

The Swede into Livonia hath broken,

And conquered there Ivàn-Goròd, Kopòri ;

Upon the east and south the Khan again

His hordes is raising ; a hundred thousand  
Already march 'gainst Toula and Rezàn ;  
Diseases, famine, plague—and worst of all,  
The Tcheremées in full revolt—do threat us !  
Boyars, is 't possible, 'midst such disaster,  
All Russia tottering round us to her fall  
Thus mournfully, for us to change the Tzar ?  
Granted, you find one to the very wish  
Of this our Council, are ye sure the people  
Will have him too ? Sure are ye that the country  
Will be content ? But if should suddenly  
Tumults begin, what, Boyars, then ? Is there  
Among us strength of unity that we  
Can foes within and foes without withstand,  
Resisting them with front of bold accord ?

Great is the force of custom among men ;  
Habit to them,—a scourge, aye, and a bridle ;  
Whoever be th' hereditary ruler,  
Him willingly do all obey ; and stronger  
Is he in a tumultuous year than in  
The quietest a newly-chosen Tzar.  
Near half a century Ivàn Vasilitch  
Doth reign o'er us. Anger and mercy oft  
Have chased each other in that lengthened term,  
But deep in all our hearts hath habit rooted  
Obedience unconditional, and fear  
E'en at the sound of that long-dreaded name.

Boyars! that name a bulwark is for us.  
We hold by it alone. Long unaccustomed  
To think out for ourselves, act for ourselves,  
We form no longer an entire body;  
That power which broke our own in fragments  
Binds us together, alone can bind us still:  
When strength is out, the body falls to dust.  
Our only chance of safety, Boyars, lies  
In going now, the whole assembled Council,  
'T' th' Tzar at once, in falling at his knees,  
There to entreat him yet he give not up  
His throne, aye, that he yet save Russia.

*Talking.* T' th' point he speaks. Without Ivàn  
Vasilitch,

We're lost! Better at once to go to him.  
He is our lawful Tzar. Him we obey unshamed.  
Yes, let us go to him, th' assembled Council  
Beg him.

*Seëtski.* Boyars! 'tis either that ye fear not God,  
Or ye've forgotten who Ivàn Vasilitch.  
What are the Germans, or the Poles, or Tartars  
Compared to him? Nay, what are plague and famine?  
A fierce wild beast, naught else, the very Tzar.

*Shovitski.* What hath he said? The Tzar he doth  
dishonour.

*Metislàffski.* Prince Peter Ilitch! thy wits have left  
thee, then?



*Seëtski.* Not I, but thou, yes, all of ye are mad.  
Is there but one of you that hath not had  
A brother, or a father, or a mother,  
Relative or friend, to death done by him?  
Boyars, to see you thus the heart is sick.  
I should not try to rouse you, if 'twere not  
That he himself would from his throne descend.  
Not worse than you the Holy Writings know I.  
I do not call you to revolt, but he  
Himself would cease to ruin and to slaughter,  
Would shave him monk, that Russia once awhile  
Might breathe again—while ye prepare yourselves  
To ask that he would slaughter as before.

*Godunoff.* Prince, of the Tzar to hear such speeches,  
we

Are minded not. Thou out of heat hast spoken.  
Informers there are none here to denounce thee.  
Here is my answer : no choice is left us.  
When two ills threaten, who can be in doubt  
To take the least? which better? Russia see  
I' th' hands of enemies, the Khan in Moscow,  
Our churches, all that we hold sacred outraged;  
Or as before obediently to bear  
The yoke of God's appointed? Can it be  
Our lives are dearer to us than our country?  
And one word more : 'tis true that our great Tzar  
Hath been to us unmerciful and threatening;

But now that time is passed : thou Prince, hast heard  
That humble-hearted he is grown no longer  
What he was, but merciful ; and if again  
He take on him the kingdom, not to the country,  
But to his foes alone, will he be fearful.

*Voices.* So will he ! He is right ! He speaks to  
th' point !

*Seètski.* Boyar, I know thou hast a wheedling  
speech ;

With crafty tongue thou hast the gift of gilding  
All that thou wilt. In truth thou fearest loss  
Of power when another in the place  
Of Tzar Ivàn shall wear the crown. Beware him,  
Boyars ! The soft bed will be hard to lie on.

*Godunòff.* Boyars, I take you all as witnesses  
That this reproach I have not merited.  
Ye know that power I have never sought ;  
I did but speak just now when asked by you.  
But, Boyars, I perhaps am in the wrong ;  
Prince Seètski older, wiser is than I ;  
If ye agree with him, then am I ready  
T' accept as Tzar Nikìta Romànovitch,  
Or whom ye will.

*Voices.* No, we won't have Zachàrin !

*Godunòff.* Or, it may be, the Prince Mstislàffski,  
Boyars ?

*Voices.* No, none of him ! We are ourselves not less

Than is Mstislàffski !

*Godunòff.*

Or take Shouïski, Boyars ?

*Voices.* And him we want not! We will not be under  
A Shouïski! We will have the Tzar Ivàn !

*Seètski.* Go then! Go all to him! Go to the shambles,  
Like the flock of sheep ye are! For me  
There is nothing left to do among you! [Exit.

*Voices and cries.* A rebel! He insults th' entire  
Council !

Defies us all ! A common brawler !

*Godunòff.* Let him not move your anger, Boyars !  
He spoke but as he thought. If, in your wisdom,  
On going in a body to the Tzar  
Ye have resolved, let 's go, no need for loitering.

*Zachàrin.* But that our country totters in her  
danger,  
My wishes would not jump with such a step—  
A risk too fearful now to shake the throne ;  
Then go we to the Tzar : there is no other issue.

*Mstislàffski.* Who shall our spokesman be ?

*Zachàrin.* Boyar, thyself ;  
Who else ? Thou art the eldest of us all.

*Mstislàffski.* I could not well. 'Tis but to-day the  
Tzar

Already hath been wrath with me,

*Voices.* Shouïski !  
Let Shouïski speak !

*Shoûiski.*

'Twould be no place for me.

*Zachàrin.* So please you, Boyars, I will be your  
spokesman !

His anger will not frighten me : I fear

But our country's ruin.

*Godunòff.*

No, my father,

I will not let you run upon disgrace.

Let me unto the Tzar your speech pronounce :

I care not for myself.

*Mstislàffski.*

Come ! Godunòff

Will speak for us ; he 'll phrase it best of all.

[*All the Boyars rise and follow Mstislàffski.**Saltikòff* (as he goes out to Golitzin).*Seètski* was right though. See how Godunòff

Already looks as if he 'd climbed above us.

*Golitzin.* Sat lower than all, and in the end is  
foremost.*Sheremètieff.* And he 'twas said—no places !*Troubetskòï.*

Wait awhile,

And from our seats the Tartar soon will shake us.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The Tzar's bedchamber. Ivàn, pale and exhausted in a black cassock, is sitting in an arm chair, beads in his hand. Near him, on a table, lies the Cap of Monomàch; on the other side, on a stool, are the royal vestments. Gregòri Nagòi is handing him a goblet.*

*Nagòi.* O Tzar ! one drop of wine thou 'lt drink,  
One drop refuse not. Thou these many days  
Dost wear thyself out. All this time thy lips  
Have nothing touched.

*Ivàn.* The body needs no food  
When the soul is fed on anguish. Henceforth  
Remorse shall be my food.

*Nagòi.* O mighty Tzar !  
Is 't true thou wouldst forsake us ? How will it  
With the Tzaritza be ? with the Tzarèvitch  
Thy Demètri ?

*Ivàn.* God will not forsake them.

*Nagòi.* But who can hold the reins of government  
Except thyself ?

*Ivàn.* My mind's edge is blunted ;  
My heart is faint ; my hands are powerless  
To hold the reins ; already for my sins,  
T' th' pagan God hath given victory,  
Commanded me my throne that I give up  
Unto another ; my iniquities

Are more than sands o' th' sea : a cannibal—  
Tormentor—lecher—church-profaner I :  
The boundlessness of God's long-suffering  
Have I exhausted by the last misdeed.

*Nagdi.* O Tzar ! thou dost exaggerate thy sin ;  
Thy mind went not with it. Thou meantest not  
To slay the Tzarévitch : thy staff by accident  
Did give the blow.

*Iván.* 'Tis false ! I knowingly,  
On purpose, of free will did slay him. Or  
Was I then mad, knew not where fell my blow ?  
No—I slew him purposely ! On his back  
He fell, bathed in his blood, aye, kissing  
These my hands ; and dying he forgave me  
My monstrous sin, but I forgive myself  
Such crime dare not.

*(Speaks low.)*

This very night to me  
Appeared he, beckoned me with bloody hand,  
And, pointing to a cowl, he waved me on  
With him along, unto the holy dwelling  
By the White Lake, ev'n there where lie the relics  
Of Cyril the Wonder-worker.

There loved I formerly alone to be  
At times from out the tempests of the world ;  
There loved I, far from every care, to think  
Of future rest, and the unthankfulness

Of man, and the malicious wiles of foes forget ;  
Mournfully sweet it was to me within  
Some cell to rest me from the day's exertions,  
In evening hour to watch the clouds float by,  
Hear but the wind's sough, and the cries of gulls,  
And of the lake the plash monotonous,  
All silent there. There passions all forgotten.  
There will I take the cowl, and it may be  
By prayer, by life-long fasting and contrition,  
That I shall merit pardon of my curse.

[*A silence.*

Go thou, and learn the reason that so long  
Their conference lasts. Soon shall I know their  
sentence.

When come they with their Tzar? I'll lay on him  
At once the regal mantle and the crown !

[*Exit Nagdi.*

The end of all ! And hither am I brought  
Along the lengthened path of majesty.  
What have I met with on 't? Sufferings alone.  
E'en from my youth but knowing of unrest,  
Now on the steed, amid the whistling shot,  
The heathen subjecting, now in the Council  
Struggling against the Boyars in revolt,  
I see behind me but a long-drawn line  
Of sleepless nights and troubled days.

I have not gracious to my people been—

No ! I had never mastery o'er myself.  
Father Silvester, my good old tutor,  
Would say to me, " Ivàn, take care ! In thee  
Satan would seat him. Open not thy soul  
To him, Ivàn." But I was deaf unto  
The holy agèd man, and oped my soul  
Unto the devil. No, no Tzar am I.  
A wolf ! a stinking cur ! a tyrant !  
My son I 've slain ! Cain's crime I have outpast !  
A leper I in soul and mind ! The sores  
That eat away my heart are countless !  
O thou, God Christ, heal me, and forgive me  
As thou the thief forgavest. Do thou cleanse me  
From my unheard-of foulness, and among  
The choir of the blessed count my soul.

*[Nagòì hurriedly returns.]*

*Nagòì.* Great Tzar ! a messenger has just come in  
From Pskoff.

*Ivàn.* I am no longer Tzar—let him  
To the new one.

*Nagòì.* He says that from Prince Shouïski  
He brings glad tidings.

*Ivàn.* Well, let him enter !

*[Nagòì lets in the Messenger.]*

*Messenger.* Great Tzar ! thy Waywode, Boyar  
Prince Ivàn,  
Petròvitch Shouïski, with all Pskoff's defenders,



Doth salute thee. Helped by thy fervent prayers,  
By intercession of the blessed saints,  
And might of th' Holy Cross, we 've beat off  
All assaults. The numbers of the enemy  
That fell were countless. In haste to Warsaw  
Went the King for aid, ordering his Waywodes  
To carry on the siege.

*Ivàn.* God be praised! How was it?

*Messenger.* Five weeks already  
Had they mined, dug trenches, and incessantly  
Poured shot upon the walls. Prince Shouïski bade  
To meet them mine with mine, and underground  
The miners met. A fearful combat raged;  
Our troops contrived to fire the chamber; they,  
Together with the Poles, were blown in air.  
Many of ours perished, but, praise to God,  
The enemy's works exploded all.

*Ivàn.*

What next?

*Messenger.* Seeing the failure of their mines, they  
drew  
The battering ordnance to the neighbouring hill,  
And towards the evening made a breach. At once  
Against it rolled we up our guns,—*Panther*  
And *Crackler*,—and when they already rushed  
Into the breach with shouts, we round shot fired,  
And beat off their attack.

*Ivàn.*

What next?

*Messenger.*

By morning

A general assault the King commanded.

We rang the siege bell, marshalled all our muster,

Around the ancient walls with banners flying

And with prayer carried the sacred relics

Of Vseðvolod, and then the Poles awaited.

A murmur hoarse spread round, as if a storm

Were coming on.....We met their headlong rush

At every scarp, the outposts, then the walls,

The buttresses, the ruins of the breach, the tower ;

We cast upon them earth-pots powder filled,

Stones, beams, and burning flax.....Already they

Came slacker. Suddenly the King was in

The midst of them, himself led the Drousjini.

And they, as waters roar against a rock,

Once more in strength poured on. In vain our hal-  
berds

Beat them off : into the tower of Svinàr

The Lithuanians swarmed ; like ants they crept up ;

New bands crept after them ; long held we out ;

But in the end.....

*Ivàn.*

Well ?

*Messenger.*

In the end they broke us

And the tower mastered !

*Ivàn.*

So 'twas for this

Ye kissed the Cross. Ye breakers of your oaths !

Ye sons of those sold Christ ! What did Shouiskì ?

*Messenger.* The Prince Ivàn Petròvitch, seeing that  
The enemy had filled the tower, seized  
A lighted torch, and with his own hand cast it  
Into the vault. With one loud clap the tower  
Flew up in air, and with a hail of stones  
Strewed far around the Lithuanian posts.

*Ivàn.* At last! What then?

*Messenger.* That was the last assault.  
The King left Pskoff, giving unto Zamòiski  
The command of the siege.

*Ivàn.* Now praise to God!  
I see that His Almighty Providence  
Doth watch o'er me. How now, King? Didst not  
think

To rival thee with me, with me, a monarch  
By God's grace, that thou art King by favour  
Of Polish Pans? Let's see how thou wilt bruise  
Thy head in butting 'gainst the walls of Pskoff.  
How many Lithuanians fell?

*Messenger.* The score  
Gave near five thousand killed, and twice as many  
Wounded.

*Ivàn.* What, King? My payment, likes it thee  
For Pàlotsk and Velisj? How many killed  
Of theirs when ye were first invested?

*Messenger.* They,  
In five assaults, had twenty thousand killed,

And we lost seven.

*Ivàn.* Enough were left of you,  
Enough for five shocks more. [*Enter a Stòlneek.*

*Stòlneek.* Great Tzar !

*Ivàn.* What now ? Is their consulting over ?  
[*The Stòlneek gives Ivàn a letter.*

*Stòlneek.* A soldier, made prisoner by the enemy,  
Hath brought for thee a letter back, great Tzar.

*Ivàn.* Give here ! [*To Nagòi.*

Read it, Gregòri.

[*Exit Stòlneek.*

*Nagòi (opens it and reads).* To the Tzar

Of all the Russias, to Ivan, from Andrew  
Prince, son of Prince Michael.....

*Ivàn.* What ? What ?

*Nagòi.* From Andrew  
Prince, son of Prince Michael, Kourb.....

*Ivàn.* From Kòurb ski  
Ha ! To my letter he, out of his grace,  
Doth deign an answer send.

[*To Messenger.*  
Begone !

[*To Nagòi.*  
Read on !

*Nagòi.* But Tzar.....

*Ivàn.* Read on.

*Nagòi.* Kòurb ski, thy sometime subject,

And holding now, under the Polish crown,  
The principality of Kòvel, sends  
Thee greeting. Harken to my words.....

*Ivàn.*

Well, what?

*Nagdi.* I dare not venture, Tzar.

*Ivàn.*

Read on.

*Nagdi (continuing to read).*

Thy doltish

And idly-babbling waste of sheets I 've read,  
And have conceived thee. Higher than the stars  
Of heaven lifting thee in pride, yet lower  
Thyself abasing than the Pharisee,  
Dost thou of treason that was never wrought  
Accuse us. Thy words, O Tzar, worth.....laugher...  
And thy reproaches.....

*Ivàn.*

Well? "And thy reproaches?"

*Nagdi.* And thy reproaches — tales of drunken  
wives.

To write in such a coarse and shambling style  
Should shame thee, to a foreign land where men  
Are oftentimes not unskilled in rhetoric.  
This thine unasked confession of thyself  
Is out of place in, and offends mine ear.  
No Presbyterian I, but as a soldier  
Serve my sovereign, the High and the Most Noble  
Stephàn, Grand Duke of Lithuania,  
O'er the nobility of Poland King.  
God's blessing on our arms, already we

Have ta'en from thee Velisj, Ousviàt, and Pàlotak,  
And well we hope shall soon be taken Pskoff.  
Where now are all thy by-gone victories ?  
Where now are all the wise and gifted men  
That took for thee, at risk of life and limb,  
Many a fort, and 'neath thy feet Kazàn  
And Astrachàn subjected ? They are all  
Killed, massacred, and tortured, and by thee !  
Thine armies, left without good captains, like  
A flock of sheep that have the shepherd lost,  
Flee from before us. See'st not, O Tzar,  
How little all thy fools and thy buffoons  
Avail thee in the place of tortured chiefs ?  
See'st thou now, that dancing at the Masks  
And dealings with the Goddess Aphrodite  
Are something else than fight i' th' open field ?  
But of fight, it seems, thou little thinkest ;  
Thy soldiers thou'st cast from thee.....

*Ivàn.*

To thee end.

*Nagòì.* Thy soldiers thou'st cast from thee.....run-  
agate !

And shut thee i' th' house like any driveller.....  
'Tis like thine evil conscience tortures thee,  
The memory of all thy senseless acts.....  
Bethink thyself ! And that.....

*Ivàn.*

Well, what ? Go on ;

“ And that ? ”.....Read on.

*Nagòì.* And that thy folly thou  
May'st see into, and thy vexed spirits soothe,  
I send unto thee two *Epistles* writ  
By Cicero, the Roman orator,  
To his two friends, to Claudius and Marcus.  
Read through them at thy leisure, and let this  
My humble letter serve thee for the while  
As.....

*Ivàn.* Read on to the end.

*Nagòì.* O Tzar !

*Ivàn.* "Let this,  
My humble letter serve thee for the while".....

*Nagòì.* As whipping-rod to mend thy ways ! Amen.

[*At the last words of Nagòì, Ivàn snatches  
from him the letter, looks into it, and begins  
to crumple up the paper. He is seized with  
spasms.*]

*Ivàn.* Sitting beyond the reach of harm, thou  
barkest,  
Like a cur yelping from behind the hedge !  
Out of my hands it hath not pleased thee, Prince,  
To take the crown of passing earthly pains,  
And with it everlasting bliss inherit.  
But wouldst thou not, out of thy grace, be pleased  
To Moscow come, and there by word of mouth  
Repeat to me what it hath pleased thee write ?

[*Looks round him.*]

And here not one of all the many left  
That thought with him? No, brother, son-in-law,  
No brother of his wife, not ev'n his thrall!  
Not one is left! I've settled with them all,  
And silently am now obliged to stomach  
This abuse. Not one have I got by me!

*Enter Stòlneek.*

*Stòlneek.* Great Tzar! the Council of the Boyars now  
Are coming in a body to thee.

*Ivàn.*

Ah!

They are welcome. They are come to put  
Another in my place. And well-pleased they,  
methinks.

Away with a worn-out Tzar! 'Tis time now  
To cast *him* forth like to a withered branch.  
Already do they hug, methinks, the thought  
How, down the Red Stairs, from the Palace going,  
My wallet on my shoulders I shall carry.  
Out of their grace, perhaps, for Christian pity,  
They will be minded mine old coat to leave me!  
Let's see whom it behoves me render up  
My place to. Boyars, I pray you, enter.

*[Exit Stòlneek.]*

In truth what kind of Tzar am I to them?  
Under this monkish habit am I like  
Myself? 'Tis I that have ere this untaught them  
Before the crownèd Prince to tremble. What



Writes Kouÿrbski ? My troops I have deserted ;  
Men scoff at me. I even write but loosely,  
Like to a drunken, babbling wife. Is 't not so ?  
Let 's see who comes as the sagacious Tzar,  
That taketh on him mine inheritance  
Whiles yet I live.

*Enter the Boyars.*

Boyars, I greet you well !  
Your consultation hath been long enough ;  
But now at last the sentence of your Council  
Is pronounced, and by you chosen, doubtless,  
One to succeed me unto whom no shame  
'Twill be to yield my throne. He is for certain  
Of birth illustrious. Not less than we  
In parts, in warlike spirit, piety,  
And mercy, he will better us. Well, Boyars !  
Before whom am I, then, to bend the knee ?  
Before whom to fall down ? Before thee, Shouïski,  
Or before thee, Mstislâffski ? Or, it may be,  
Before thyself, Boyar of mine, Nikita  
Romànovitch, defender of mine enemies.  
An answer, then ; I wait for it !

*Godunoff.*

Great Tzar !

Ourselves submitting to thy sacred will,  
We have consulted. Our unanimous  
To all intents unalterable sentence  
We have beyond return pronounced. Listen !

Except thyself, a master over us  
There shall be none. Thou hast been hitherto  
Our sovereign ; 'tis thou must govern us  
Henceforth. With that our lives we yield up  
Unto thy will—punish us or pardon.

[*Falls on his knees, imitated by the other Boyars.*

*Ivàn* (after a long silence). And so ye thought  
to put on me restraint !

Ye 'd bind me as a prisoner, and keep me,  
Whether I would or no, upon the throne.

*The Boyars.* O Tzar ! By God thou hast been given  
to us !

No other for our sovereign will we have  
Except thyself. Punish us, or pardon.

*Ivàn.* It must be that my mantle sits but ill  
Upon your shoulders. Ye the weight of empire  
Again would lay on me. Thus will it fall  
On you more lightly.

*Shoûiski.* Tzar ! desert us not :  
Take pity on our need.

*Ivàn.* God be my witness,  
I did not think, I did not wish to put  
On a tired head again my irksome crown.  
Far different thoughts were mine : my soul did seek  
Another good. But ye not so decided.  
To the ship broken on the waves of life  
Ye 've barred the harbour. Let it be as ye

Would have it. I yield me to your Council :  
Against my will most utterly, I take again  
This golden crown, and style myself  
Once more Tzar of the Russias and your sovereign.

[*Puts on the cap of Monomàch.*

*The Boyars.* Long live our Tzar, Ivàn Vasilevitch !  
*Ivàn.* Give me the mantle.

[*Puts on the royal vestments.*

Come hither, Boris !

Thou spokest boldly. For the kingdom's good  
Didst put thy head in pledge. I ever hear  
Well pleased, free speech straight from an honest  
heart.

[*Kisses Godundoff on the forehead, and turns to  
the Boyars.*

The second time have I, against my will,  
By resolution of the Council, now consented  
To stay upon the throne. Woe to the one  
Henceforth among you who imagineth  
Against me aught, or breaketh bread with those  
I have disgraced ; or any act of mine  
Within the past, although but secretly,  
Shall dare to judge, forgetting that my acts  
Are judged by none, for power is there none  
Above me that cometh not from God !

[*Looks round him.*

But

Seëtski I do not see among you.

*Godunoff.* Let not thine anger fall on him, great  
Tzar !

Pardon the witless one.

*Ivàn.* What is 't with Seëtski ?

*Godunoff.* He would not come with us here to entreat  
thee.

*Ivàn.* He would not come ! See, what a wag is  
that !

Lo, what he hath devised ! When all the Council  
T' entreat me in a body had resolved,  
He would not come. That means that he is one  
Wi' th' Lithuanians ? and with the Khan  
Of Perekòp ? With Kouëbski ? Off wi' his head.

*Zachàrin.* Great Tzar ! permit me on this joyful  
day

One word for Seëtski.

*Ivàn.* Too late thou 'st thought on 't,  
My whilom brother. If that thou hadst wished  
Traitors to spare, thou shouldst have sat  
Thyself upon the throne : to-day the chance was thine.

[*To the Boyars.*

Let know the Envoy of our good sister,  
Elizabeth, that I to-morrow do appoint him  
Personal audience. Now to the cathedral,  
And unto the Most High bend we the knee !

[*Exit with Boyars.*

## ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A room in the Palace of Ivàn. Zachàrin and Godunòff discovered.*

*Godunòff.* B' the clock an hour that with the  
English Envoy  
He sits alone. Strict orders he hath given  
To let none in.

*Zachàrin.* Were we not all mistaken,  
And thee as well, Boris? No gracious ruler  
Is he, now seated on his throne again.

*Godunòff.* What could we do?

*Zachàrin.* Boris! Boris! If only  
It be not worse than formerly. Know 'st thou  
Of what their talk?

*Godunòff.* I do, my father, though  
Right glad were I to know it not;  
The Tzar would the Tzaritza put away,  
And seeketh through the great Queen's Envoy  
Her niece's hand, that of the Lady Hastings.

*Zachàrin.* God bless us! For the eighth time  
would he marry.  
I knew he thought of it before his sin,  
But now,—now when he'd almost ta'en the cowl

Upon him, now,—it cannot be. Art sure  
Of it?

*Godunoff.* To-day he told me so himself.

*Zachàrin.* And what didst answer? Didst thou  
tell him that

He doth devise a heavy sin? That he,  
At his years, amid the woeful ills his  
Kingdom groans with, should not think of marriage,  
But of how t' uphold the land?

*Godunoff.* No, my father.

*Zachàrin.* No, thou didst not?

*Godunoff.* No, 'twas no time for it.

He can't forget that yesterday his crown  
He would put off. The thought that he of power  
Had nearly been deprived hath made it now  
Still dearer to him, just as if he sought  
To make up for abatement in 't. All that,  
With thee together, for the kingdom's good  
Through him we would have bettered, must we now  
Conceal from him, and our own thoughts in him  
Unknown to him instil, that he may take it  
For his own thought, not ours.

*Zachàrin.* Thou 'rt right, Boris;  
Thou 'st always better understood his mood.  
Act for the best as thou best canst, but any way  
Restrain him.

*Godunoff.* Father, day and night I think

Of this alone : how and by what restrain him ?  
I seek in vain a way that 's possible.  
There are no means to work on him.

*Zachàrin.*

Boris,

Then we have erred. His pride will bring us all  
To some mischance, if thou canst not succeed  
In guiding it.

*Godunòff.* Your counsel give me, then.

*Zachàrin.* 'Tis not for me to counsel thee, Boris :  
God hath with skill endowed, and thought thee worthy  
Of supple wisdom. Not for naught hast thou  
The Tzar's love sought, and held thee from his sins  
And his dark acts aloof. Then keep thy wit,  
And act thou for thyself. Fear only this,  
Forget not thou dost serve not for thyself,  
But for thy country ; that the gifted mind  
And the ambitious one too oft are twin ;  
And that the crooked path with time becomes  
A danger to the soul.

*Godunòff.*

How glad were I,

My father, if my onward steps along  
The straight and even path might ever tread.  
But can it be so ? Thou dost know the Tzar ;  
Thou thyself knowest what mine enemies,  
And how they look out for advantage  
To set me once for all aside, or ruin me.  
What should I do ? I must unflinching

Pursue the snares of these my foes, and set  
'Gainst cunning cunning, or renounce for ever  
All hope to serve my country.

*Zachàrin.*

God forbend !

Thou answerest for her unto him. Boris,  
The fate of Russia hangs on thee.

*Godunòff.*

Oh ! if

Indeed it did on me depend, my way  
Would lie before me. Let the Tzar Ivàn,  
Though only for a month, give me to govern,  
In one short month I'd show to him what strength  
This Russian land doth hide in her. I'd show him  
What power can, when not on punishment,  
But mercy, it is founded. Oh, my father !  
It doth weigh heavily to see all this,  
And impotently speak not.

[*A Stòlneek opens the door.*

*Stòlneek.*

Ho ! the Tzar !

[*Ivàn enters with letters in his hand.*

*Ivàn.* Shouïski hath writ to us : plague and revolt  
Are rife from famine in the royal camp ;  
Their King, it seems, hath to his senses come,  
And out of Warsaw sendeth me an Envoy.

*Zachàrin.* May God give health unto the Waywode,  
Prince

Ivàn Petrovitch.

*Ivàn.*

Our besieged again



Have kissed the Cross to act like Christian soldiers ;  
Die all, and not surrender. But I think  
That our good Coz, Stéphàn, hath now small liking  
To the siege, and if with reinforcement  
He come where hunger waits him, get we sticks  
To drive him off.

[To Zachàrin.

T' th' market-place go thou ;  
Inform the people that the King doth beg  
A peace of me.

*Zachàrin.* O Tzar ! but if 'tis not  
With peace the Envoy comes ?

*Ivàn.* I take it, thou  
Art pleased to teach us. 'Twas apparently  
By error that the Boyars brought to us,  
And not to thee, the crown. Go thou, old man,  
And tell the people on the market-place  
That the King begs a peace of me.

[Exit Zachàrin.

*Ivàn (to Godunoff).* I have concluded with the  
English Envoy ;  
But he is slow and squabbling o'er his points.  
The English, look ye, should have rights of trade,  
Be free of taxes ; aye, give up all to them.  
Invite him to thy house to dine with thee,  
Talk over it with him advisedly,  
And what he saith report to me.

*Godunoff.*

Great Tzar!

But yesterday thou saidst to me, free speech  
That cometh from an honest heart thou hearest  
Willingly : permit me now before thee  
Freely to speak again. This Englishman,  
I fear, may think thee over-anxious for  
Th' alliance of the Queen, and then will he  
Wax still more obstinate. Were it not better  
Let him depart the business unconcluded?  
If then the Queen, as 'tis most hard to think,  
Hold to the lifting of the taxes, thou  
Canst always send an Envoy unto her  
With thy consent.

*Ivàn.*

Put otherwise, the Boyar

Borìs it liketh not that Tzar Ivàn  
Should be of kin unto the English Queen?  
Thus? Is 't not? Speak! I look thee through.

*Godunoff.*

Great Tzar!

In vain would I have tried to feign with thee  
What any thinketh thou dost read. 'Twas e'en  
With me as thou hast said, Tzar. I confess me  
Of my fault. Send me to punishment, but  
Listen : not me alone, great Tzar, but all  
Wide Russia this new marriage liketh not.  
All Russia the Tzaritza loves, for she  
Is pious, and still more for that she is  
The mother of Demètri, after thee

The second that must one day mount the throne.  
For thy Tzaritza, e'en as for thyself,  
The people daily in the churches pray,  
But what their cry, and what will say the clergy,  
When thou the mother of Demètri puttest  
Away from thee, to take another bride  
Of other faith! These thy eighth nuptials, Tzar,  
Will they not say that our calamities  
(And it may chance that many more befall us)  
By *thee* are brought upon the land? Great Tzar!  
Then punish me; but at thy feet I pray,

*[Falls on his knees.]*

For Russia holds by thee alone. Essay not  
At such a time to shake her faith in thee.  
Turn not away from thee, thus fruitlessly,  
The people's love.

*Ivàn.* Hast done? Thou 'st turned, I see,  
Th' encouragement I gave thee to good use,  
And truly thou 'rt not bold by halves. Seeing  
The favour I have graced thee with, thou thinkest  
Naturally that, for my guidance, I  
Do keep thee. What? the Zènstro, then, hath set  
thee

B' my side? Is 't not to blame or to approve  
My acts? and thou canst bend me as the wind  
Can bend the reed. I' faith, 'tis laughable  
To see ye all. How ye would put on me

The priest, as once Silvester ! On thy lips  
The milk that suckled thee was yet undried  
When to the priests, Silvester and Alexis,  
I'd shown myself already more than boy.  
Since then, as I myself conceive it best,  
As it may bring advantage to my kingdom,  
So do I act ; and grieve me not for aught  
That this or that one say of me. I build up  
Not for a day, not for a year, the throne  
Of Russia, but for the length of ages ;  
And what i' the distance I foresee, that thou  
Blinded seest not with those hen's eyes of thine.  
Know, then, I keep thee by me but for that  
Thou shouldst my will fulfil, and punctually ;  
And that thine only merit. Get thee up.  
This time I pardon thee ; but, for the future,  
Thrust thyself not on me as counsellor.  
The Envoy thou 'lt invite, and show to me  
The points agreed to-morrow.

[*Exit by the other door.*]

*Godunoff (alone).*

He is right.

I am his slave. I ought to have foreseen it.  
Was't that I knew him not ? I've acted like  
A woman, like a boy. Like an idiot  
Have I acted.

Lo, the straight and even path,  
The path Zacharin bids me tread ! As by

A wall, the first step that I take on it  
The Tzar's will bars it me. For the State's good,  
Defending the Tzaritza, e'en the house,  
Time out of mind the foes of mine, Nagòì,  
I would have saved with her the men that now,  
This very hour assembled, are consulting  
How they may ruin me. I was content  
To-day to spare them, if that Russia only  
Could stand unshaken by the Tzar. Behold  
What comes of it! Easy for thee, Nikìta  
Romànovitch, to tread the even path.  
Thou hast no aim before thee set. Thou lookest  
Calmly upon this world, in quiet sadness.  
Like to the sun upon a wintry day,  
Beaming on earth, but warming not the ground,  
Thou wendest pure and bright unto thy rest.  
My soul doth seek for action and for strife.  
I cannot be at peace so easily.  
Dissentions, snares, and despotism see,  
And; in my loyalty, that whitest garb,  
Be comforted that I am pure and upright!

*[Exit by the other door.]*

SCENE II.—*Shoûiski's house. Shoûiski, Metislàffski, Michael Nagòi, Gregòri Nagòi, and Bèlski are seated at table drinking.*

*Shoûiski (helping the others to wine).* Mine honoured guests, I pray you drink. And here I give the health of Godunòff! 'Twas he, I' faith, that settled our affairs in Council!

*[The guests drink unwillingly. Metislàffski does not drink at all.]*

What ails thee, Prince Ivàn Feòdoritch?

The wine, perhaps, is little to thy taste.

Shall we not try another, and a stronger?

*Metislàffski.* No, Prince, I thank thee. Not the wine, the health

It is which, I confess, dislikes me.

*Shoûiski.*

What!

Thou wilt not pledge me, Prince, to Godunòff?

And there ye also, Boyars, knit your brows:

Do ye dislike him so?

*Metislàffski.*

An upstart! Tartar!

And basks him, look ye, nearest to the throne.

*Bèlski.* And we, of course, must cool us in the shade.

*M. Nagòi.* His foot will soon be now on all our necks!

*G. Nagòi.* No, it will not; 'tis planted there already.

*Shoûiski.* Hold ye there, Boyars. What, Godunòff?

Against his will it is that he is raised

Above us, and it vexes him. He always

Both gives us honour where 'tis due, and, in  
The Council, is ever ready to be silent  
Or agree with us.

*M. Nagòì.* Yes, there's a natural,  
Whom none can quarrel with; yielding to each,  
Bending to all, the imp! He not the less  
Gets his own way at last.

*Shoùiski.* Well, this time we  
Must thank him for 't.

*Bèlski.* This time is not the first,  
And will not be the last. Seètski that's gone  
Spoke truth: he'll break us all yet.

*M. Nagòì.* Yes; he will,  
If we don't break him first.

*G. Nagòì.* How can we break him?

*Bèlski.* We might get something noised abroad about  
him.

*Metislàffski.* And who will then believe us? One  
short word  
From him, and we, like Seètski, are confounded.

*M. Nagòì.* No; so impossible. Yet might we other-  
wise.

But then Prince *Shoùiski*, look ye, stands by him.

*Shoùiski.* I stand by him? Why, what is *he* to me?  
No godfather, wife's brother, sister's husband!  
I only meant he was not worth your trouble.

*Bèlski.* Why, art thou blind?

*Shouïski.* No, Boyar, I'm not blind.  
When brought to act, you would yourselves think  
twice.

*Bèlski.* Oh, fear not that !

*Mstislàffski.* We'd stand, then, by each other.

*G. Nagòï.* We all are ready to kiss the Cross on 't.

*Shouïski.* Tut ! Then it liketh you yourselves to  
run

A noose upon your necks !

*Bèlski.* Well, Prince, forgive  
My speech if rough. Blind art thou as a mole,  
And thou wilt be the first to find thyself  
Dislodged by this same Tartar in an instant.

*Shouïski.* Thou thinkest so ?

*Bèlski.* I'm well assured of it.

*Shouïski.* If so, the matter wears another face.

*Bèlski.* Then thou consentest ?

*Shouïski.* Why should I alone  
Stand out 'gainst all ? An 't please thee, I consent.  
But how begin the matter ?

*M. Nagòï.* Thus we'll do :  
Just now we have, on all sides throughout Russia,  
Both pestilence and blighted crops. Troubles  
There've been already. Beyond the Mòskva,  
Two separate revolts have raged. The people  
At such times are exasperate ; they're glad,  
Not waiting to make choice, to throw themselves



On the first comer. It depends on us  
To catch the humour of the time, and, watching  
Our moment, let them loose upon Boris.

*G. Nagði.* 'Twould not be bad. Keep in the dark  
ourselves,  
And let the people rid us of Boris.

*Mstislàffski.* Yes, in the dark. But how to raise  
the people?

We cannot well ourselves go on the market.

*M. Nagði.* Most true; we want a man that we can  
trust.

*Bèlski.* Or else one whom we have that hold upon :  
He shall be ever in perpetual dread.

*Mstislàffski.* Where shall we find him?  
*Shoùiski* (*opening a door into an inner room*). Enter,  
Danilitch!

*Enter Beetiagòffski.*

Behold him, Boyars, the very man we need!  
I've spoken with him : he is glad to serve us.

[*General surprise.*]

*Bèlski.* So thou..... Well, Prince, a frank surprise!

*G. Nagði.* We're tricked,

If ever men were, finely.

*Mstislàffski.* And 'twas he  
That toasted Godundøff.

[*Shoùiski smiles.*]

*M. Nagði* (*pointing to Beetiagòffski*). So, he it is

That undertakes our business. But who,  
Then, is he? It imports us much to know.

*Shouïski.* He is a noble, Michael Beetiagòffski.  
I pray you grant him favour and esteem :  
He'll not betray us.

*Bèlski.* Prince, of a verity,  
We've proof enough thou wantest not for cunning ;  
We know that we can trust thee ; yet permit,  
In an affair so full of danger, that,  
Without offence to thee, or blame to him,  
I put a question. How dost answer for him ?

*Shouïski.* Boyars, the case is clear : at dice and cards  
He hath his fortune squandered all ; in debt  
He sits up to his neck ; and now he's threatened  
With distraint. Two ways are open to him :  
To serve us faithfully,—we pay his debts ;  
To dupe us,—and we leave him to the law.  
Danilitch, is 't not so ? Is the pact clear ?

*Beetiagòffski.* 'Tis clear.

*Shouïski.* If thou this matter can adjust,  
We will reward thee.

*Beetiagòffski.* That's self-evident.

*Shouïski.* I say this to thee, not as a reproach,  
But that these Boyars may have faith in thee.  
Now, sit thee down.

*Beetiagòffski.* I can as well be standing.

*Shouïski.* There, pour thee out, and drink.

*Beetiagòffski.*  
Do worse.

One might

[*Drinks, bows, and puts the goblet back on the table.*]

*Bèlski.* 'Tis true; then, that thou canst against Boris  
Stir up and rouse the people?

*Beetiagòffski.* Yes, I can.

*M. Nagòï.* With whom would'st thou begin?

*Beetiagòffski.* The common people.

*G. Nagòï.* What wilt thou speak about?

*Beetiagòffski.* About the famine.

*Bèlski.* What wilt thou say?

*Beetiagòffski.* What comes into my head.

*Mstislàffski.* And dost thou answer for success?

*Beetiagòffski.* I do.

*M. Nagòï.* The people must be stirred to rise in  
earnest.

At first thou must prepare them skilfully :  
Boris it is hath raised the prices on ye ;  
He holds the Tzar in leading strings ; from him  
Come all your ills. Maloûta's son-in-law !  
And he the one hath moved the Tzar to punish !  
This done, find thee a holiday, or some  
Such fit occasion, that he shall to church  
Be going, aye, or leaving it, and then  
Incite the mob to action. It were well  
Thou joined another with thee.

*Beetiagòffski.*

It is needless.

*Bèlski.* Mere cries and noise wont serve the turn ;  
It wanteth, when the mob see Godundèff,  
That they should throw themselves at once upon him,  
And tear him piecemeal.

*Beetiagòffski.*

To pieces they shall tear him.

*Shoùiski.* Rely upon him, Boyars ! He is curt  
In speech, but when it comes to act,  
He 'll stick at nothing ; he is no beginner.  
And ye, meanwhile, the Boyars try to sound :  
The more of us, the easier 'twill be  
To bring him to the point.

*Bèlski.*

Some one or other

I'll find in any case, and send him out  
Likewise among the people. I do know  
Of one whom I have long had eye upon ;  
A noble from Rezàn, Prokòphi Kèèkeen.

*Shoùiski.* If thou canst answer for him, be it so ;  
Send him as from thyself ; from both ends let them  
I' th' city breed commotion ; and if then  
The one doth not succeed, the other may.

*Mstislàffski.* Such lips as thine, O Prince Vasili

Ivànitch,

Should drink but mead.

*M. Nagòì.*

Well, now, thank God for it,

All goes on well !

*Enter a Servant.*

*Servant.* The Boyar Godunoff!

*Shouïski (aside).* The devil damn him!

*Enter Godunoff.* The guests rise in confusion.

*Shouïski goes to meet him with open arms.*

Boris Feddritch!

Ever welcome guest! Humbly I thank thee  
For thy kindness.

[*They embrace.*

Seat thyself here, Boyar,

Under the image, honouring my house:

What can I find that's fit to offer thee?

See here Roumanian wines, and Rhenish here,

Or Alikant thou mayst prefer, or Bastre.

*Godunoff (bowing).* I give thee thanks, Boyar  
Prince Vasili

Ivànritch. But am I not intruding?

Thou hadst, perhaps, with these thine honoured guests,  
Something of moment toward?

*Shouïski.* Not of moment,

Boyar. We did but joke together. Pray,

Be seated. Now, to do me honour, Boyar,

Accept, if but one draught.

*Godunoff.* I drink thy health.

[*Mstislàffski approaches Shouïski.*

*Mstislàffski.* Kind host, I must be home; good bye!

*Bèlski.* I also

Must be home; good bye!

*The two Nagòis.*

'Tis time for us, too.

Good bye, then, Prince Vasili Ivànitch.

*Shoûiski.* What, honoured guests ! Why, then, so early off ?

*M. Nagòis.* We have to do at home.

*Shoûiski.*

Well, good bye, then,

Boyars ! I thank you for the honour done.

[*Conducts guests, and returns to Godunòff.*]

And now, praise be to God, they 're gone ! This visit, Boyar, makes me truly grateful. Thou'lt not Believe the pleasure that is mine to see thee.

Truly we two have long been one together.

What thou—that I !

*Godunòff.*

Thanks to thee, Prince Vasili

Ivànovitch. I came to ask thee for

A counsel.

*Shoûiski.* My services are thine, Boyar.

*Godunòff.* Thou knowest, Prince, the Council love me not—

A new man I.

*Shoûiski.*

And what of that ? I 'm for thee

Heart and soul ; though true it is there are

That do mislike us. Say Mstislàffski does,

Or may be Bèlski—who can tell ? One sees

They envy thee the love the Tzar doth bear thee !

*Godunòff.* The Tzar doth favour me beyond my merits ;

A slippery path it is, O Prince, I tread.  
Some day they 'll poison the Tzar's ear against me,  
And ruin here with us comes quickly, Prince.

*Shouïski.* And I, then, count for nothing? I would  
brave

Or fire or water for thee. Art thou not  
A brother to me?

*Enter Servant.*

*Servant (to Shouïski).* Prince, from the Tzar to thee.

*Shouïski (rising).* For me? and now? Well, you 'll  
forgive me, Boyar—

The Tzar waits no one.

*Godunoff.* No excuses, Prince.

*[Exit Shouïski hurriedly. Godunoff remains  
alone with Beetiagoffski, and fixes him with  
his eye. Beetiagoffski is confused and  
turns away.]*

Thou art the noble, Michael Beetiagoffski?

*Beetiagoffski (turning to go).* Yes, I 'm a noble.

*Godunoff.* Not a step! Stand there

And listen! Thou'st ruined thyself at cards.

Distrain will soon be on thee—things go ill—

But they may take a turn still worse for thee.

Thou'st written to the Lithuanian camp

Offering thy service to Zamòiski.

*Beetiagoffski.* No, that's a lie! They have slan-  
dered me!

*Godunoff.*

I have

Found means to intercept thy letter, and  
See, here it is, thine own words, line for line !

*[Takes a letter out of his pocket—Beethagoffski bends down, and puts his hand into the leg of his boot.]*

Thou takest to thy knife ? Don't trouble thee !  
Thy paper 's under triple lock, and this  
Is but a copy. Listen, friend : Prince Shouïski  
Hath bargained with thee, yesterday, to set  
The people on me. Thou to-day hast talked  
The matter o'er with Bèlski, the Nagòis,  
And with Mstislàffski. I 've but to wish it,  
And in an hour the crows will peck thy flesh.

*Beethagoffski.* Boyar.....I, I did not consent.....

*Godunoff.*

Be silent !

Thou must from this same moment make pretence  
Of serving Shouïski. Go about the squares,  
The markets, the bazaars, but spread the rumour  
That Shouïski is with Bèlski leagued to poison  
The Tzar himself ; and that they have resolved  
To do to death Feoddor the Tzarévitch,  
And his brother young Demètri ; say that  
They would have, but for Godunoff, already  
Ended our line of Tzars ; that Godunoff alone  
Doth guard the Tzar, and keep from harm the kingdom.  
Hast understood ?



*Beetiagòffski.* I have.

*Godundøff.*

Come thou to-day

Unto my house to me ; be on the stairs  
That lead up from the back : when first it darkens,  
There thou wilt find the steward who 'll conduct thee,  
Each evening thou 'lt come again. All that  
Shoùiski, or Bèlski, or any other bids thee,  
Thou wilt repeat to me at once. Remember !  
Where'er thou be 'st, there will I follow thee :  
Give not a wish, not e'en a thought to flight ;  
The difference know 'twixt me and Shoùiski there,  
That he doth fright thee with restraint, and I  
Do threaten thee with such a punishment  
That it had ne'er been thought of by Maloùta  
Skouràtoff—Bèlski, my wife's late father.

[*Exit—Beetiagòffski remains lost in astonishment.*]

## ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The room of the Tzarìtza Maria Feddorovna.  
The Tzarìtza and the Nurse of the Tzarèvitch  
Demètri discovered.*

*Tzarìtza.* Well, Nurse, what sayst thou? Is he  
yet to bed?

And sleeps he well, my darling the Tzarèvitch?

*Nurse.* Yes, Madam, he's asleep, and fast asleep.

Just now I could not take my eyes off him;

He lay so quiet, his little eyes were shut,

And both his tiny fists were clenched. The pet,

He had been running, fit to die with laughter;

And such a brisk one! Not one whit in him

Of his elder brother, Feddor Ivànitch.

There is one mild and gentle, so to say

Scarce a Tzarèvitch, most unlike in all

To what his brother was, Ivàn Ivànitch.

La, it was he, God rest his soul, that was

His father's self again. Ah me! Ah me!

To think of it, that he is dead, and how?

Oh, what a sin! One's head goes round with it.

*Tzarìtza.* We shall do well, Nurse, not to speak of  
it.

Hath not the Tzar a message sent to say  
That he is coming here? Hath he not sent  
To know of some one if my child be well?

*Nurse.* No, Madam, he hath no one sent.

*Tzaritzza.*

There was

A time that he inquired each day himself.

*Nurse.* No, Madam, no one hath been sent. But we  
An't please, not long ago, during our walk,  
Were met b' th' Boyar Godunoff, who coming  
To join us, the Tzarévitch in his arms  
Took up, and 'gan to fondle and admire him.

*Tzaritzza.* And thou didst let him fondle the  
Tzarévitch!

No one should fondle him. Dost thou hear, Nurse?

*Nurse.* Aye, Madam! And the Boyar Godunoff  
Spoke to me this wise: look to it well, Nurse,  
Keep the Tzarévitch from all harm. Thou must,  
Saith he, for every hair upon his head  
Answer before thy God and country.

*Tzaritzza.*

Nurse,

Listen to me: it will not do for thee  
To chatter thus with every one. Henceforth  
Thou wilt let no one to the infant speak.

*Nurse.* Nay, but thou dost not think it of me,  
Madam?

An't please, the other day came up to us  
Nikita Romànovitch; but with him,

Of course, then, we must never speak ?

*Tzaritza.*

Not so ;

With him thou mayst. I can have trust in him,

He 's all to me that could be mine own father.

*Enter Chambermaid.*

*Chambermaid.* Tzaritza ! may Nikita Romànovitch,  
Zachàrin-Youèreff enter to thee ?

*Tzaritza.* He here ? at once, at once let him come  
in.

*Enter Zachàrin.*

*Zachàrin.* Good day, Tzaritza Maria Feòdorovna !  
Art well ?

*Tzaritza (going to meet him).* Good day to thee,  
uncle Nikita

Romànovitch ! God sendeth thee. I must  
Speak with thee. Go to the Tzarévitch, Nurse,  
Leave us.

*[Exit Nurse.]*

I 've need to talk with thee, Nikita  
Romànovitch. Seat thee here, nearer to me.  
I know not, truly, what hath come to me ;  
Something these last days weighs upon my heart,  
As if it boded misery. Tell me,  
Thou hast heard nothing ? Hath there happened  
aught ?  
The Tzar, what thinks he of ?

*Zachàrin.*

I came, Tzaritza,

To give thee warning. I myself no longer  
Know what to do with him. 'Tis a sad case  
For all of us. Like to the horse that starts  
Wild on a sudden with the bit in mouth,  
Or like a raging buffalo that all  
Breaks down before him in his run, so he  
Now knows of no restraint. His pride a river  
That breaketh from its banks, and drowneth all  
Around.

*Tzaritzza.* But tell me, what is in his thoughts?

*Zachàrin.* God alone knows.

*Tzaritzza.* They speak within the  
palace

Of something terrible. He long alone  
Sat talking with the English Envoy; yes,  
I know—I 've guessed—he marries him, and with  
A foreigner, and he will cast me forth,  
To go with my Demètri where I may.

*Zachàrin.* Be thou prepared, my child, to meet the  
worst.

*Tzaritzza.* 'Twas not for nothing that my heart was  
sad.

*Zachàrin.* Tzaritzza, he this morning meant to come  
Himself to thee. Let him not see that I  
With thee have talked of this. I will be here,  
List humbly to him, and whate'er he saith  
Answer him not a word—be dumb. A single

Sound, a single sigh, one gesture from thee,  
And thou art lost. Let, then, the storm rage by.  
It may be yet thy humbleness will soften him ;  
And, if it be not so, on mine own head  
Will I receive the blow. I 'll tell him openly  
That such an act doth shame his conscience.

*Tzaritza.*

*Boyar,*

Oh, save me ! 'Tis not for myself I fear ;  
I fret not for myself, thou knowest it.  
When first Ivàn Vasilitch chose me, then  
That honour little gladdened me ; if he  
Had three years back divorced me, then would I  
Have thanked God for it ; but I, Boyar, now  
Am not alone. I am a mother now ;  
And if he take another wife to him—  
My child may—oh ! I dare not think of it—  
Demètri, he, my little one—Oh ! Boyar !  
I know not what I say myself, know not  
What is 't I fear, what I believe ; but darkly  
I see before me danger for Demètri.  
Speak to, appeal to th' conscience of the Tzar.  
He honours thee. Look thou into the matter  
First with him.

*Zachàrin.* Tzaritza, thou my child ! whom honours  
he ?

I, to say sooth, before him never yet  
Have worn a crooked conscience, but myself,

I know not how I have escaped. But one  
There is on earth to whom he will at times  
Yet listen. God give Godunoff both life  
And health ! 'Tis he alone that now is able  
To restrain him.

*Tzaritza.* Oh, uncle ! put no trust  
In Godunoff. He is not what thou thinkest.  
His air of meekness, his soft measured manners,  
And then that look, that is by nothing ruffled,  
And then that voice, that ever is the same,  
They fright me not without a cause. I cannot  
Bear to look on while he my child doth take  
And fondle it.

*Zachàrin.* What's come to thee, *Tzaritza* !  
Thou mean'st it not : what, Godunoff ?

[*A Maidservant runs in out of breath.*]

*Maid.* The Tzar  
Is coming ! Will be here directly !

*Tzaritza (frightened).* Uncle !  
It frightens me ! I cannot.....

*Zachàrin.* Go quickly,  
Set thee to rights, that he may notice nothing !  
And dry thine eyes !

*Tzaritza.* Oh ! the heart faints of me !

*Zachàrin.* Off with thee on the instant ! Put thee on  
Thy best, and I will here receive him.

[*Exit Tzaritza. Ivàn enters accompanied by  
Godunoff.*]

*Ivàn (to Zachàrin).* What

Dost thou here?

*Zachàrin.* I wait for the Tzaritza, Tzar.

*Ivàn.* What matter

Canst have with the Tzaritza?

*Zachàrin.* I but came

To make inquiries of her health.

*Ivàn.* Where is she?

*Zachàrin.* Hearing thy voice, she went to put her on  
A dress that might do honour to thy visit,

*Ivàn.* And might have stayed just as she was. Her  
dress

Won't make her comelier.

[*To Godunòff as he sits down.*

Go on! Thou saidst

That thou hadst seen the Envoys?

*Godunòff.* Both, great Tzar!

*Ivàn.* Well, what then?

*Godunòff.* Bowes, the Envoy of Ellisa,  
Assureth that the Queen will give to thee  
Her niece, the Lady Hastings' hand; but he  
Hath no authority to sign to that  
A written contract, 'till the time that thou  
Art publicly divorced from the Tzaritza;  
He also added, thou must trade forbid  
Throughout all Russia unto foreigners  
From every kingdom, but excepting always



Our English guests. In that case, doth the Queen Promise, so saith he, friendship and alliance, And that she will the German Emperor beg To move his troops on Poland.

*Ivàn.* I give much thanks unto Elizabeth, Our sister, that she is not squeamish in Accepting of a friendship and a kindred Sorry as ours. We can, however, now Get on without her favours, and we ask not The Emperor for aid. Soon we ourselves Will troops convey beyond our borders. Hah ! What didst thou learn from th' Polish Envoy ? What lands doth promise Coz Stéphàn for peace ?

*Godunòff.* Over the wine, great Tzar, we sat with him 'Till morning broke. Garàbourda drinks deep, And likes to hear him talk, though no born Pole ; But draw from him I could not what had brought Him hither. Unto thee alone, he saith, Will he disclose it.

*Ivàn.* There 's not much, I take it, To make him boast beforehand.

*Godunòff.* I' th' morning  
There came a hasty messenger unto him  
Sent by the King express. In vain I strove  
To read the meaning of the letter in  
The Envoy's eyes. No feature of his face  
That moved. The tired messenger, as soon

As he had quaffed one draught, fell down and slept.

*Ivàn.* I take it, slept not once upon the road :  
Their plight is clear, in straits unbearable.

*Godunòff.* If it were only.....

*Ivàn.*

What?

*Godunòff.*

If it were

only

No bad news that he brought to us.

*Ivàn.*

Bad news

I've not received ; and what I know not of  
Is not.

*Godunòff.* Be cautious, Tzar !

*Ivàn.*

Boris mine, is 't

Again not thy advice that thou art pleased

To offer us ? Turned coward hath, say I,

Our Coz Stéphàn, and fresh concessions sent

T' instruct Garàbourda. Hey ! Mària !

*[Strikes on the ground with his staff.*

Wilt thou be long there huddling on thy gauds ?

*Enter the Tzarìtza in full dress. She salutes*

*Ivàn, and stands before him in silence.*

*Ivàn (looking intently at her).* Why hast thou cried  
thine eyes out ?

*[The Tzarìtza keeps silence, looking down.*

Hearest thou ?

What 's come to thee ?

*Tzarìtza.*

My Lord, forgive me.....I.....

*Ivàn.* Well ?

*Tzarìtza.* I 've had an unpleasant dream.

*Ivàn.* What dream ?

*Tzarìtza.* I dreamt, my Lord.....I dreamt I was  
.....I was.....

Parted from thee !

*Ivàn.* A dream that 's nicked it. Thou 'rt  
Displeasing to me. I am come to tell thee  
That from this moment thou no longer art  
A wife to me.

*Tzarìtza.* 'Tis true, then ? It is true ?  
Thou mean'st to cast me with Demètri forth ?  
With my Demètri ? Thou dost mean.....

*Ivàn.* Silence !  
Old women's tears and cries I like them not.

*Tzarìtza.* No, my good Lord—I do not weep—I  
will not ;  
Thou seest that I do not weep ; but say  
On what plea wilt thou be divorced from me ?  
What wilt thou to the Clergy say ? what fault  
Wilt thou then find to lay on me ?

*Ivàn.* What 's that ?  
Thou putttest me to question as I take it ?  
Who art thou ? Daughter of what sovereign ? Whom  
Must I give answer to of thee ? Is 't that  
Thou art more comely, handsomer than others,  
For me to keep thee fast as any treasure ?

Or that I am not master of my house ?

Or that thou art Tzaritzza of thyself ?

*Tzaritzza.* Forgive, my Lord ! Forgive ! I murmur  
not :

I do not ask for grace ; I am content

All to endure ; but he, my poor Demètri,

In what is he to blame ?

*Ivàn.* Put not thyself

About for him. My son in appanage,

We 'll have the town of Oûglitch. For thy faults,

I need them not. I 'll have thee shaved, and there

Is thy divorce. The Clergy, God be praised !

I have not used to meddling with my household,

Or asking an account of me.

*Zachàrin.* Great Tzar !

Permit me now to say one word to thee.

*Ivàn.* Old man, I see what thou art bent on saying

Whate'er I do 'tis not in grain with thee,

I know thee well.

*Zachàrin.* Great Tzar !.....

*Ivàn.* I know thee well.

Thou wouldst be glad to tie my hands again

As in the times of priest Silvèster, or

Adàsheff. Thou wast friends with them. When I

My ban put on them, where was the misfortune

That thou didst not predict to me ? To hear thee,

The State had fallen in two. And what not else ?

Since then full twenty years have passed, where now  
Is thine Adàsheff? where Silvester? We,  
Under God's blessing, have meanwhile kept this  
Our kingdom undiminished. Still we manage,  
Unschooled by thee, after our simple way,  
To live on with our own wits' aid and thee,  
Old man, for guidance ask we not.

*Zachàrin.*

Great Tzar!

What we have conquered by the sword, that we  
B' th' sword may lose again. All things do lie  
In God's hand, Tzar; but God doth only bless  
Good actions: thou, O Tzar, an evil one  
Devisest. Thy Tzaritza is all pure  
Before thee, pure as light. A sin to thee,  
That thou wouldst put a new wife in her place.  
Rather than seek in England for allies,  
Look round on Russia. What are her provinces?  
Thou, Tzar—I tell thee openly—thou hast  
Frightened in early youth by dire seditions,  
Thy whole life feared revolts that were unreal,  
And crushed a harassed land. Thou 'st broken in her  
All that was of strength, thou 'st trampled under  
All that was of mind, thou 'st made the men of her  
Mere mutes, and thou thyself, most like an oak  
I' th' open field, now stand'st alone, with naught  
That thou canst lean on, if—which God forbid—  
Thy happy fortunes leave thee, thou wilt be

Before misfortune naked all and poor.  
Misfortune is not far to seek, O Tzar !  
Glad not thyself with victory o'er Bathòry,  
Russia hath other straits. The Khan, the Swedes,  
Do threaten us, and in our midst are rife  
Injustice and disorder, aye, and famine.  
These no alliance with the English can  
Stave off from us. An old man I, great Tzar !  
And nearing to my grave. No gain have I  
In idly thwarting thee. And thou thyself,  
Great Tzar ! art no more young. Come to thy years,  
For thee to think anew of marriage is  
A sin, aye, and unworthy of thee. Thou  
Shouldst thank God for the gentle wife He gave,  
And seek thee not another.

*Ivàn.*

*Nikita !*

I've let thee run on to the end. Thou art  
Nearer unto the grave than thou dost think ;  
I'm weary grown with sparing thee. To answer  
Thy prating it were easy for me ; but,  
I answer thus. I will it so. Enough !  
Not one word more ! 'Tis time that we receive  
The Envoy of Bathòry. Follow me,

*[To the Tzarìtza.*

And get thee ready for the cloister, thou !

*[Exit with Zachàrin.*

SCENE II.—*The throne-room. The whole Court, in rich dresses, enter and arrange themselves along the walls. By the doors, and around the throne, stand the Body Guard with axes on their shoulders. Trumpets and bells announce the entrance of Ivàn.*

*He enters from the inner chambers, together with Zachàrin.*

*Ivàn (to Zachàrin).* Show in the Envoy! But let honours none  
Be done to him. I am not minded further  
To dally with Bathdry.

*[Exit Zachàrin. Ivàn takes his seat on the throne. Through the door of audience enter Garàbourda, who with a low salute stops before Ivàn.*

*Ivàn (eyeing him from head to foot).* 'Tis not the first time that I see thee, Pan  
Garàbourda, before my throne. Thou wast,  
Upon the death of Sigismund the King,  
Sent to me with a message from the Diet?

*Garàbourda.* I was, great Tzar!

*Ivàn.* I do remember me,  
The Pans of Poland offered me the throne.

*Garàbourda.* 'Twas even so.

*Ivàn.* But to become your  
King,

My power making not hereditary,  
Did not seem good to me. It pleased ye not  
T' accept the terms I made.

*Garàbourda.* Great Tzar ! we could not  
Violate th' Republic's privileges.  
We have a law, that each time should our King  
Be chosen by the Diet.

*Ivàn.* A right good law :  
A worthy sovereign did it give to you  
In Henry.

*Garàbourda.* May the devil have him ! He  
Was for us but a sorry King. And when  
He ran from us, we washed our hands of him,  
And chose another.

*Ivàn.* Yes, Bathòry, who  
Paid tribute to the Sultan when that he  
Was Prince of Transylvania. Well, what wants he ?  
What hath he charged thee now with ?

*Garàbourda.* My Most High  
And Mighty Lord, King over Poland, Prince  
Of Transylvania, Lithuania's Duke.....

*Ivàn.* Hold there ! Art not orthodox ? They told  
me

Thou went'st to our cathedral unto mass ?

*Garàbourda.* E'en so, Tzar !

*Ivàn.* Why dost, then, own  
for Lord



A Latin heretic?

*Garàbourda.* Because, great Tzar !  
He all the liberties of the Ukraine  
Hath strengthened, he our sacred church doth honour,  
And lets us drive out all the cursed Ksèndsi.\*

*Ivàn.* All faiths are one to him, and I have heard  
He giveth honour also unto infidels.  
Well, tell us, then, with what petition he  
Hath sent thee to us ? What is the asking of  
Our Coz Stéphàn ?

*Garàbourda.* He begs henceforth, Pan Tzar,  
That thou wilt call him not thy Coz, but give him,  
In writing and by word of mouth, the honour,  
Denominations, title, dignities,  
Withal, which shall to his High Majesty  
Suffice.

*Ivàn.* Hah ! He's a jester ! Now, in that same  
hour  
That he runs home from 'neath the walls of Pskoff.  
It is not bad though. Further !

*Garàbourda.* Furthermore,  
From thee he doth require that now at once  
From off Livonian soil thou do withdraw  
Thy troops, and that unto the Polish crown  
Thou do, in sovereignty for aye, surrender

\* A name given to the Polish Roman Catholic Priests.

Smoleùsk, and Pàlotsk, Nòvgorod, and Pskoff.

*[Murmurs through the assembly.]*

On these terms is he willing to conclude

A peace with thee.

*Ivàn.*

Ho, Envoy! Hast thou emptied  
Many wine-pots? How darest thou before me  
Appear thus drunken?

*[To the Stòlneeki.]*

Which of ye hath ventured

T' admit a man not sober to my palace?

*Garàbourda.* If to thy taste, Pan Tzar, these same  
conditions

Savour ill, the King Stéphàn doth bid me

Say to thee, "Why should we spill in vain the  
blood

Of our two peoples? Let us on our steeds

Do mortal battle with our sabres, man

To man, as most befitting gentle knights."

And therewith sends the King to thee this glove.

*[Throws down before Ivàn an iron gauntlet.]*

*Ivàn.* Which of ye both hath lost his senses? Thou  
Or the King? For what that glove? Is 't not that I  
Should strike thee with it o'er the face? Thou dog!

Hast thou forgotten that thou art not now

In the presence of an elected King?

Darest thou call into the field the one

By God anointed? I'll find a field for thee!

I'll have thee, in a bear's skin sewn, cast forth  
Into a field for curs to worry.

*Garàbourda.* Nay,  
That, Pan Tzar, thou can'st not do.

*Ivàn.* What's that?  
Jokes he not with me? Boyars, I'm grown, it seems,  
A butt for jest-breaking?

*Garàbourda.* Nay, nay. That can't be,  
To sew an Envoy in a bear's skin up.

*Ivàn.* Out of my sight! Whip him hence, ye  
knaves!

Drive him with lashes back unto the King!  
Out of the palace with thee! Out dog! Out!

*[Seizes an axe from one of the Guard, and  
throws it at Garàbourda.]*

*Garàbourda (warding the blow).* Thou art in haste,  
Pan Tzar. Thou hast not yet,  
As it would seem, Pan Tzar, heard that from Warsaw  
With reinforcement comes the King Stéphàn;  
That on the frontiers he already hath  
Utterly routed all thy troops. Thou hast,  
As it would seem, not heard yet that the Swedes  
Have ta'en Naròva, and prepare to march  
Together with the King on Nòvgorod.  
Thy Waywodes are but sorry ones, that they  
Have not informed thee of 't.

*Ivàn (rising from the throne).* Thou liest, villain!

*Garàbourda.* Ah! but by God 'tis true. Why should I lie?

It is not well to lie. Then as, Pan Tzar,  
Thou wilt not meet in loyal battle with  
The Most High King, the King himself to Moscow  
Will come to thee. Now, keep thee well.

[*Exit. General agitation.*]

*Godunoff* (*entering hastily*). Great Tzar! what  
hast thou done? Thou hast affronted  
The Envoy of Bathòry.

*Ivàn.* He doth lie

Like any cur!

*Godunoff.* No, Tzar! It is all true.  
Messengers from camp are just come in;  
I've seen them. The Swedes have ta'en Naròva;  
Our troops are routed!

*Ivàn.* They lie, the messengers!  
Hang them all up! Death to the one who saith  
That I'm defeated! *My* troops cannot be  
Defeated. The tidings of *my* victory  
Must come. And see that the Te Deum now  
For victory be sung through all the churches.

[*Sinks back feebly on the throne.*]

## ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A public place in the quarter beyond the Moskva. On one side are corn-shops. The Kremlin is seen beyond the river. Twilight. A crowd assembled before one of the shops.*

*Cornchandler.* Be off with you ! Again ye're hustling here.

Ye have been told the price. 'Tis seven alteens  
For each half-quarter.

*1st Workman.* Good man, thou hast bowels ;  
Let us off something, if but one alteen.

*2nd Workman.* Four days we've eaten nothing.

*3rd Workman.* In God's name !

*4th Workman.* Have some pity, neighbour. Hand  
me a measure,

And score it up. By Easter I will pay,  
So help me, Christ !

*Cornchandler.* Get out of that ! By Easter !  
'Tis likely I'll my master's goods give out  
On credit. Move on with ye, when told, there.

[*Fighting.*

*1st Workman.* Thou cannibal ! wouldst starve us  
out ?

*2nd Workman.*

Thou 'st better

Cut all our throats at once.

*3rd Workman.*

False thief and rogue !

*4th Workman.* Dog of a Jew ! Canst eat up all  
thyself ?

*Cornchandler.* Ho, help there, help ! They're break-  
ing up my shop.

[*Enter two Prèestaffs.*

*1st Prèestaff.* What is this noise ? Who makes all  
this disturbance ?

*Cornchandler.* Help, 'tis a revolt ! They'll have  
my door down.

*1st Workman.* We're wronged, good sirs. Stand  
by us.

*2nd Workman.*

Bid him bate

His prices, sirs.

*3rd Workman.* Don't let us die of hunger.

*Cornchandler.* They were going to plunder me.

*1st Workman.*

He lies !

He fights himself. He's all but crippled more  
Than one of us.

*1st Prèestaff (to Cornchandler).* How dare'st thou  
honest men

Thus cripple ? Hah !

*2nd Prèestaff.* To jail with him ! He'll answer  
T' th' law.

*Cornchandler.* Good sirs, but look ye now ; for what

The jail? I stood up for my master's goods.

[*Slips money into their hands.*]

1st *Prèestaff*. Oh, if 'tis so!

2nd *Prèestaff*. Why not say so at first?

1st *Prèestaff* (*to the people*). Away, ye thieves! I'll give it ye, away!

2nd *Prèestaff*. To the torture with 'em! To the jail!

[*The crowd draw back.*]

Ah, ah!

[*Exeunt both Prèestaffs.*]

*Cornchandler* (*looking after them*). The cheating villains see, along the market

Peering to find another they may fleece.

1st *Workman*. And served thee right.

2nd *Workman*. May thy hoards choke thee till Thou burst!

3rd *Workman*. We die from hunger here, and he Sits, like a rat snug in a bin of corn,  
And sulks.

[*Exit Cornchandler.*]

4th *Workman*. The *Prèestaffs* got it out of him.

1st *Workman*. They are appointed, friend, to keep good order.

4th *Workman*. Fine order, truly. Would the Tzar might know!

1st *Workman*. In former days, the Tzar, for taking bribes,

Punished them nicely. I myself saw it.  
Once, nine men swung together : from their necks  
Were hanging all the bribes they 'd taken.

2nd Workman.

Yes,

The Tzar let none bear hard upon the people.  
He used to stand upon the Palace stairs,  
Taking himself from any hand petitions,  
And form a Court. The trial was not long :  
Th' offender, even though a Prince or Waywode,  
Once detected, and his head was off.

*Enter Keèkeen, who joins the group : he is disguised as  
a pilgrim, in a black under-cassock, and carries a  
stick and beads.*

Keèkeen. Thus it was once, my sons, thus it was  
once.

Those times have passed. Now, for our sins, the Tzar  
Hath his eyes blinded by an enemy.  
In these days, not the Tzar, but Godundøff,  
Doth govern all. With *his* eyes sees the Tzar,  
And not his own.

*[The people crowd round Keèkeen.*

Ye heard the Cornchandler ?

His master's goods—not his. And who the master ?  
Why, 'tis Godundøff. Who is the cause that  
Prices rise ? Again, 'tis Godundøff. Easy  
To say fourteen alteens here for a quarter



Of rye. Were 't not for Godundff, you 'd have it  
At most for two alteens.

[*Murmurs among the people.*

Ah, we the Lord

Have angered, brethren. These our pains are just.  
We look upon our sins, and fold our arms  
The while this heretic gets round the Tzar,  
Aye, aye, gets round him.

[*The murmurs increase.*

It is not for nothing

That the Lord hath set His sign before ye.  
The star that hath a blood-red tail—I think  
Ye must have seen it?

1st Workman. How! Not see it?

2nd Workman.

There,

Over the tower, these many nights it  
Rises.

3rd Workman. And there it will appear again  
As soon as the sky darkens.

Keekkeen.

It shows us

The awful anger o' th' Almighty. 'Tis  
His fiery sword raised over us, that we  
Have left the Tzar, and with him all the land  
T' th' insults of a wicked heretic.

1st Workman. How came this known to thee?

Keekkeen.

I roam, my sons,

All holy places through. At Solovki

I 've been, and, on the Mount of Athos, in  
Jerusalem, heard talk of all ; o'er seas  
Have sailed, and tramped it over lands ;  
Have seen the great whale-fish, and Eðstrafeel  
The bird, with Alateer the stone all white  
That burns i' th' fire. I come now from Kiëff.  
A mighty miracle hath just been wrought there.  
From out Sophia's cross a loud voice came :  
It prophesied unto the Russian people  
Ruin for that they bore with Godunøff.

*1st Workman.* Comrades, ye hear now what the  
pilgrim saith ?

*Keëkeen.* And then the voice pronounced, Christians,  
arise !

And gird ye up your loins 'gainst Godunøff ;  
For he it is that bringeth woe on Russia.

*2nd Workman.* Hearken ; take note on 't. All our  
ills do come  
From Godunøff.

*Keëkeen.* 'Tis so, 'tis so, my sons—  
From Godunøff. He doth forestall the corn ;  
He spreads the pest ; he calls the King to Russia ;  
He boasts that he will stir the Khan 'gainst Moscow.

*3rd Workman.* Come, boys, it has the look on 't.  
If 'tis true  
That he alone's in fault, we 'll settle him.

*4th Workman.* But is it true ?

*Keèkeen.*

It is the sober truth.

A sin, my sons, if we God's voice believe not.

*5th Workman.* Thou'st heard it with thine own ears, Pilgrim?

*Keèkeen.*

Yes;

'Twas when the people out of church were thronging  
From vespers, all ablaze Sophia's cross  
Appeared; and from it sounded forth a voice.  
Not I alone, but all the men of Kiëff,  
Heard it, and all in fear fell prone to earth.

*3rd Workman.* What say ye, boys? If all the town  
of Kiëff

Did hear the voice, it stands to reason that  
'Tis true.

[*Talking among the people.*]

In truth, 'tis true. 'Tis clear that Godunoff's  
A traitor! Yes, a traitor and a conjurer!  
'Tis he that draws on us the wrath of God,  
The Antichrist!

*1st Workman.* Eh, what is that, friends? Enough,  
A sin in you to blacken him.

*2nd Workman.*

A sin,

Indeed; of Godunoff we've only, comrades,  
Heard what's good.

[*Cries among the people.*]

The simpletons! Don't hear them.

They take the conjurer's part; let 'em look out for it.

Down with the first that speaks up for the thief!

He buys our corn up; he is Antichrist;

He's caused our misery; let's do for him.

What are we waiting for?

[*The voice of Beetiagòffski heard singing a rollicking song.*

*Beetiagòffski (singing without)*—

“Come here, my gall, that loves a glass,

That's paid me many a spree,

And tell what thou dost carry there,

Under thy frock to me?”

*1st Workman.* Who's bawling there? What, doth  
he come to mock us

At such a time as this with noisy catches?

*Beetiagòffski enters with his cap on one side, and his  
coat unbuttoned.*

*Beetiagòffski*—

“I come just from the beershop, boys,

A frolicking along,

And carry a psaltry 'neath my frock

To sing with ye a song.”

*Keèkeen (to Beetiagòffski).* My child, a heavy sin, at  
such a time

As this, when God is wrath with us, and when

His sign appeareth in the heavens, the while

He sendeth hunger and affliction on

The earth, a heavy sin it is, to vanity

To give ourselves, and yield us up to pleasures  
O' th' world, and gladden with idle speech  
And song-singing the devil in hell !

*Beetiagòffski.*

Friend,

Thou 'st mouthed it well. It is a pity only  
Thou 'rt wide o' th' mark ! When shall we make us  
merry

If not now ? Then ye 've not heard of yet, boys,  
The boon that God has sent us.

*Several voices.*

What boon ? Speak !

What boon is it ?

*Beetiagòffski.* Why, look ye here, boys, listen !  
The two Boyars, Prince Shouïski, aye, and Bèlski—  
May God deal with them—have resolved—may they  
In rosin in the next world burn for it—  
Resolved the Tzar to poison.

*Several voices.*

Hear, boys ! Listen !

[*Kèèkeen makes sings to Beetiagòffski.*

*Beetiagòffski* (*paying no attention to him*). God  
would not let such sin be worked out. So,  
Their villainy being known to Godunòff,  
The self-same pie which for the Tzar they 'd cooked  
He threw unto a dog. The dog no sooner  
Had eaten than it died.

*The People.*

The villains they !

The cursèd rogues ! But who, then, saidst thou, who  
Did save the Tzar ? Who gave the dog the pie ?

*Beetiagòffski.* 'Tis well known who. The Boyar  
Godundòff.

And who else could it be? By day, by night  
He watches o'er the Tzar. And long ago  
Had he not been there, would the cursed Bèlski,  
With Shouïski's help, have put an end to  
The whole line of our Tzars.

*1st Workman (to Keèkeen).* What didst thou say,  
That Godundòff was traitor?

*Keèkeen.* Yes, a traitor!

Or God to no end hath upon us sent  
For his sake signs and famine.

[*Aside to Beetiagòffski.*

Art thou mad?

Or hast thou drowned thy wits in wine?

*2nd Workman (to Keèkeen).* How traitor,  
If he the Tzar hath saved from death?

*3rd Workman (to Beetiagòffski).* Come, friend,  
Have done with that. This Pilgrim here hath heard  
Himself, how that God's voice from out the Cross  
Did Godundòff denounce.

*Beetiagòffski.* A Pilgrim here?  
Where is he? That man, eh? Ha, ha! Ha, ha!  
Fine Pilgrim he! Why, he's Prokòphi Keèkeen,  
A noble from Rezàn. We've often with him  
Run all the taverns through. He from Rezàn  
Hath not tramped further than to Moscow here.

[*Slapping Keèkeen on the shoulder.*

Prokòphi Seèlitch, would'st thou hoax me, man?  
Thou'st figged thee out like any Lazarus.

*Keèkeen (in a whisper to Beetiagòffski).* Art thou,  
then, cracked?

*Beetiagòffski (in a whisper to Keèkeen.)* For whom  
art thou?

*Keèkeen (in a whisper to Beetiagòffski).* What's that,  
For whom? I am for Bèlski. We both took  
Bèlski's price.

*Beetiagòffski (with contempt).* Thou'st need to get  
thee up, man,  
A little earlier.

*Keèkeen.* Ah! then thou play'st  
The Judas with us? Wait awhile, and see  
If I don't Bèlski tell of this.

*Beetiagòffski.* Fear not,  
Thou wilt not have the chance. Bind him, my boys!  
Shoùiski and Bèlski have sent him to us.

*Keèkeen.* No, 'tis not true: bind him! From Godundòff.  
He's sent to us.

*The People.* Who can make them out? We're  
hoaxed  
By one of them. Ho, boys, let's waste no time,  
But hang 'em both up! Why hang both? Enough  
With one! But which one? Why, the first? The  
second?  
No, the first.

[*The roll of tabours heard without. Gregòri Godunòff appears on horseback, with two heralds. Another crowd follows them.*

*The People.* Hold hard there, boys! Hush! Silence!  
A Boyar with heralds! Keep ye still there.  
He means to speak to us. Silence all! Listen!  
He's speaking.

*Gregòri Godunòff (speaking from horseback).* Ye  
men of the River Quarter,  
People of Moscow and the villages,  
The servant of the Tzar, his trusted Boyar,  
Boris Feëdorovitch Godunòff,  
Sendeth you greeting. Filled with sorrow for  
Your fate, and knowing all your difficulties,  
The pestilence and high price now of rye,  
All that of bread stored there is yet in Moscow  
He hath, of his own means, bought up and ordered  
That without payment it be given out  
To you to-morrow, for the which he asks  
Your prayers for him and for his health.

*The People.* A father  
He to us! God give him health! He feeds the poor!  
Hark to him, Godunòff will give out bread  
For nothing to us. Lord God, watch over him!  
Return it him a hundred fold. Long life  
To Boyar Godunòff. Ah! who was it  
Called him our enemy? Where is the thief, the dog?



We'll tear him limb from limb.

[*Keèkeen tries to run off; the mob throw themselves on him with cries.*

Down with him ! Down !

Stop him !

*Beetiagòffski (laying his hand on Keèkeen's girdle).*

Well fool, what hast made by it ?

The next time look and see from where the wind blows.

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SCENE II.—*The inner chamber of the Tzar. Night.*

*The Tzaritza Maria Feèdorovna, the Tzarèvna Ireèna Feèdorovna, and Maria Gregòrovna are looking out of the window : on a sky covered with stars stand out the towers of the Kremlin and the tops of many churches. Between the church of the Annunciation and that of Ivàn is seen a large comet.*

*Maria Godundva (to Ireèna).* Look, sister mine,  
see there how far the star

Hath spread its tail ! It covers half the sky

Exactly o'er the town.

*Ireèna.* It seems to grow each night  
Larger and more distinct.

*Enter the Tzarèvitch Feèdor Ivànovitch.*

*Feèdor (pulling Ireèna by the sleeve.)* Have done,  
Ireèna !

Enough ! go thou away ; it is not well  
To look at that too long ; it is not there  
For any good it brings.

*Tzaritzza (to Feodor).* Where is the Tzar ?  
Can he be looking still upon the sign ?

*Feodor.* Yes, Madam. On the steps he's standing  
still,  
And looking at the star. I wished to speak  
With him, but was afraid. He looks and never  
Speaks a word, and around him stand the Boyars,  
Not daring e'en to raise their eyes to him.

*Tzaritzza (thoughtfully).* How many evenings is 't  
that he doth stand  
And gaze upon the star !

*Ireèna.* And every time  
Comes back still gloomier, and utters not  
A word.

*Feodor.* Unwelcome tidings trouble him.

*Ireèna.* Is 't true the Khan hath now drawn near  
the Oka ?

*Feodor.* Boris declared that it was true in all  
points. Fearful  
To think of it ! I wished myself to go  
Afoot to Troitski, there to say a mass,  
But knew not how to ask my father.

*Ireèna.* Ah !  
God help us ! We've misfortune on all sides !

Is not the star there come to warn us of it ?

*Maria Godundva.* God only knows ! Not long ago  
some Wizards

And Fortune-tellers, whom the Tzar had given  
Orders to seek, were brought here, that they might  
Inform him why it thus appeared.

*Tzaritzza.* What, Wizard,  
God forbid ! Has the Tzar seen them ?

*Feodor.* No, Madam ;  
Boris, however, told me that already  
Have they together been divining, and  
Should bring to-day their answer to my father.

*Ireèna.* They say that he hath sent to fetch some  
Monk  
Or other.

*Feodor.* Yes, Ireèna ; from Boris  
I heard that he had sent. A holy man that  
These thirty years and more he leads a life  
Of anchorite. The Tzar would ask advice  
From him.

*Tzaritzza.* God grant the Monk may counsel him !

*Ireèna.* God grant it ! Why should he for Wizards  
seek,

And lay a sin upon his soul ?

*Feodor (looking around).* Ireèna,  
Hush ! In the vestibule I think I hear  
What should be my father's steps.

*Stolneek (hastily opening the door, and speaking in a whisper).* The Tzar comes !

*Enter Ivàn, leaning with one hand on his staff, and with the other on the shoulder of Godunòff. He is followed by the Boyars.*

*Ivàn. (to Feòdor and the women).* Come hither, all of ye ! All now approach  
And listen !

[*Sits down.*

I have understood the sign.

The Wizards whom I bade them seek will tell me  
Nothing new—myself I 've understood it.

[*A silence. Feòdor gently pushes Ireèna forward.*  
*Ireèna (timidly to Ivàn).* O Tzar, my father.....let  
me ask of thee,

What hast thou understood ?

*Ivàn.*

Ye see yon star ?

It is the harbinger of death to me.

*Feòdor (throwing himself on his knees).* What is it  
thou say'st, my father ? What dost mean ?

*Ivàn.* Get up, and whimper not. Thou wilt have  
time

To whimper yet. First must thou take the kingdom  
Upon thy shoulders. Get thee up, I tell thee.

[*The women raise a cry.*

Be quiet, hussies ! There 'll be time for that.

Send for a doctor. I, Tzaritza Maria,

Not long since spoke not well to thee : forget it.  
Son Feddor, in an hour of heavy troubles  
Thou mountest on the throne : hast thou bethought  
thee

What thou wilt do when I am gone ?

*Feddor.*

Tzar, father !

When thou forsake'st us, what will be I know not.

*Ivàn.* But thou must know. Thou 'lt soon be Tzar.

Thou canst not

For ever ring a funeral peal. Wilt thou  
The war go on with, or wilt with Bathdory  
A peace conclude ?

*Feddor.*

Father, which way wouldst thou  
Command me act ?

*Ivàn.*

According to my sins

Is punishment from God dealt out to me.

Ivàn, Ivàn ! Mine eldest-born, Ivàn !

Thou wouldst not thus have answered me. Ho,  
doctor !

*Enter Doctor Jacòbi.*

Ah ! there thou art ! Well ? Of what use to me  
Thy science ? Die I must. Say, then, when shall I  
Die ? Speak, man ! I do wish to know.

*Jacòbi (feeling Ivàn's pulse).*

Great Tzar !

Thou 'rt ill, but hast no cause to die.

*Ivàn.*

'Tis false !

I shall die, I know it well. The star,

The blood-red star ! Am I, then, blind ? I all  
Have understood.

*Jacobi.* If thou, O Tzar, in thine own mind  
dost cease

Thyself to do thee injury, thou wilt  
Be well. I 'm ready to answer for it  
With my head to thee.

*Ivàn.* Thou liest ! The Boyars  
Have bought thee. Koùrbski and my sworn enemies  
Have bought thee, that I die without repentance.  
Ah ! who bought thee ?

*Jacobi.* Great Tzar ! from over-watching  
Thy brain is irritated, blood inflamed.  
Permit that I a sleeping draught prepare,  
And it will calm and freshen thee.

*Ivàn.* I will not  
Die without repentance. Man, dost hear ?  
I yet have time before me for repentance.

[*To the Boyars.*

I yet have time, though it should vex ye. Let  
The Wizards in. From them I will inform me  
When that mine hour cometh. Till then I 'm Tzar.  
I yet can punish him among you who  
Shall wish that I may die like any cur,  
Without repentance.

*Enter two Wizards.*

Here they are. Why are there

But two of ye? Where are the rest?

*1st Wizard.*

O, Tzar!

Together we in Råffi and Sodaja

Three days have read. We two are sent to thee

With our common answer by the rest.

*Ivàn.*

Hah!

What is it?

*2nd Wizard.* We're afraid to speak it, Tzar!

*Ivàn.* I know it all. My death? Tell me at once!

*1st Wizard.* 'Tis so, Tzar!

*Ivàn.*

When?

*1st Wizard.*

When Cyril's

day comes.

*2nd Wizard.* On Cyril's day, the eighteenth day of  
March.

*Ivàn (aside).* The eighteenth day of March! 'Tis  
soon! I thought

'Twould later be: I deemed it not so near!

[To the Wizards.]

Whence are ye?

*1st Wizard.* I was born a Finn.

*2nd Wizard.*

And I

A Lithuanian.

*Ivàn.* But who, then, taught ye

To juggle, and the stars interpret?

*1st Wizard.*

We,

Through generations that have handed it

To generations down, received it from  
Our ancestors.

*Ivàn.* Ye 're Christians.

*2nd Wizard.* We have been  
Christened, Tzar.

*Ivàn.* Is 't known to ye, ye cursed ones,  
That conjuring is not tolerated  
By our most holy Church?

*1st Wizard.* By thine own order  
Cast we our divinations.

*Ivàn.* By my order  
Wizards are punished. I 'll have ye covered o'er,  
While yet alive, up to your evil mouths,  
In earth.

*2nd Wizard.* We 're not in fault, Tzar! Th'  
power is not ours  
Out of our mouths that speaks to thee.

*Ivàn.* Whose, then?

*1st Wizard.* Ask not.

*2nd Wizard.* Ask us not, Tzar; thou  
know'st thyself.

*Ivàn.* No! I call God to witness, I reject  
That power. As for ye, apostates, I  
Will give you up unto the Church. Put irons  
On them both, and with the rest together  
Let them be led to prison.

[*The Wizards are removed.*



The eighteenth  
Of March! few days are left to me. My time  
To go before the Judge is come. But I  
Will give my foes no hold to triumph o'er me,  
And with the world will settle all accounts.

[To Godunòff.]

Boris! go to my bed-chamber: there lieth  
Upon the shelf, under the image, what  
I had begun,—a list of all my dead;  
Bring it me here.

[Exit Godunòff. Ivàn continues, looking  
askance upon the Boyars.]

Not one of those whom I  
Have ever punished for their treason will I  
Now leave unhelpt by masses for their souls,—  
Not one! For the repose of each I'll leave,  
E'en of the meanest thrall, an ample sum.  
What have ye gained?

[Godunòff enters with a paper.]

Come hither. So, that is  
The very list. Read it aloud—take thou  
A pen—and if I can some other still  
Remember, write thou down his name.

Godunòff (takes a pen and reads). "O Lord,  
Take thou unto thy rest the Boyar Michael,  
Th' Okòlnitchi Ivàn and Peter, with  
The Boyar Vasillii and his wife, and also  
Their thralls to the number of thirty men.

Have mercy on the Waywode Prince Gregòri,  
With his Princess, and with their two young daughters,  
Aye, and their infant son, counting to them  
Of their thralls a hundred and twenty men ;  
On the Boyar Jacob Prince, with his Princess  
Maria, and th' Princess Elizabeth,  
Th' two young Princes Nikita and Ivàn,  
And thralls of theirs, mounting to forty men ;  
Likewise upon the Abbots, Cornelius,  
Bassiànus, th' Prelate Leonidas,  
And with them fifteen monks....."

*Ivàn.*

Hold there—fifteen ?

There were more of them : write thou down twenty.

*Godunòff (writes and continues).* " Pardon, O Lord,  
and take unto thy rest

The peasants of the confiscated hamlets  
And villages of one Moròsoff Boyar,  
Counting a thousand two hundred ; three old men  
Baited by bears ; nine wives brought back from Pskoff,  
All the besieged who took the King surrendered,  
And were by him set free, amounting to  
Two thousand.....They that dwelt in Nòvgorod  
Slaughtered and drowned, up to twelve thousand there,  
Their names, O Lord, are known to thee !....." .

*Ivàn.*

Hold there !

Some one is speaking at the door.

[*Bèlski goes out and returns.*

*Bèlski.*

O, Tzar !

Thy Steward from Slobòda hath arrived.

*Ivàn.* At such a time ? By night ? What, then,  
hath happened ?

Call him hither.

*Enter Steward.*

Why art thou come ?

*Steward.*

Great Tzar !

The wrath of God is on us. Yester morn  
The thunder struck the attic which is thine,  
And burnt it up to ashes.

*Ivàn.*

Now ? In winter ?

*Steward.* God's wrath, O Tzar ! A frosty, cloudless  
morning,

And there was thunder. Into thy bed-chamber  
With a crash the lightning passed, and suddenly  
The palace burst out in flame. There is not  
One o' th' oldest inhabitants remembers  
A thunder-storm in winter.

*Ivàn (aside).*

Yes ! It is

God's wrath ! Within that room I put to death  
My son ; there fell he, 'tween the door and window—  
Gave but one cry and fell—tried to hold on by  
The curtain, but could not—and fell at once—  
And blood upon the curtain spirted from  
His wound.

[*Shudders.*]

What noise was that ? Boris, put by,  
Put by that list now ; we 'll end it later.  
D' ye hear ? What is that scraping 'neath the floor ?  
D' ye hear ? Again ! Again ! Still nearer ! Yes,  
God brings to life again ! I still am Tzar !  
My time hath not yet come ! I still am Tzar !  
I hold the power of repentance ! Feddor,  
Ireëna, Maria ! Stand here—one next  
To other. Nearer, so Boyars ! Stand ye  
All in a line before me here—what fear ye ?  
Nearer ! I of all.

[*Bowing himself to the ground.*

Of all ask pardon.

*Bèlski (in a whisper to Shouïski).* God pardon us !

*Shouïski (in a whisper to Bèlski).* Let us be care-  
ful ; may be

He is proving us.

*Ivàn (kneeling).* Ye, my faithful slaves

And servants ! There is not one among you

Whom I have not by act and word offended.

Forgive it me ! Thou, Bèlski ; thou, Zachàrin ;

Thou, Prince Mstislàffski ; thou Prince Shouïski ;  
thou.....

*Shouïski.* What say' st thou, Tzar ? Is it for thee  
to beg

Pardon of us ?

*Ivàn.* Peace, thrall ! I hold the power



On no man vainly either punishment  
Or confiscation. On mine enemies  
By whom I from the throne was driven, forced  
To seek me out, like any pilgrim poor,  
A refuge throughout Russia, do thou not  
Avenge me. The Almighty judges us.  
Watch over and be kind to my Tzaritzza,  
Thy step-mother ; with thy brother, Demètri,  
Be thou as one ; desire not to usurp  
His appanage. Though Cain did Abel slay,  
He got not by his crime a heritage.  
Try thou to end the war wi' Lithuania  
By a peace, and then twin all thy forces  
Against the Khan. Consult thee with Boris ;  
Put trust in him ; he doth believe in my  
Directions, and in matters of the Council  
I' ve found him from his youth well versed.  
He may at first act for thee well enough,  
But afterwards give thyself use in all  
That doth relate to the legations, or  
To war, or to the courts, that not to thee  
Should others, but thou to them in all things,  
May prescribe. Wilt thou again establish  
Th' Opritchina, or wilt thou rule thyself  
O'er all the land ? Be it as thou dost will :  
Decide thyself how most 'twill benefit  
Thyself and brother. Now, the model for

Thy conduct stands there complete before thee :  
Hast understood it all ?

*Feddor.* Father ! God grant  
That thou die not ! God grant unto my prayers  
That thou mayst still outlive me ! Am I fit  
To reign ? Thou thyself knowest I am ill  
Prepared for it.

*Ivàn (angrily).* Feddor ! thou art not asked  
If that it liketh or misliketh thee :  
Thou after me upon the throne must sit  
When I am gone.

*Feddor.* Be thou not angry, father ;  
But, I pray thee, appoint another. Russia  
Hath many worthier and better far,  
And I—O father, Tzar !—would be content  
With a small appanage.

*Ivàn.* O thou befrocked !  
I speak with thee as with a man, and thou  
Like an old woman answerest ! Woe ! Woe !  
Brother son-murder for his brother venges.  
Ivàn, my son ! my son that I have slain !  
Have I my whole life passed in strife, the strength  
O' th' Boyars broken, reduced all disobedience,  
Crushed treason round me, placed on such a height  
My blood-steeped and hereditary throne,  
That all should suddenly break down with me ?

*Gregòri Nagòi enters with papers.*

*Greg. Nagòï.* Great Tzar ! two letters for thee.

*Ivàn.*

Give them to

Boris : let him read through them.

*Godunòff* (after looking at both letters). Tzar, they write

From Serpouchòff that the Khan across the Oka  
Prepares to float his troops ; and from Kazàn  
That all around have risen in the plains,  
The Tcheremèes, and with them the Nogàys.

*Ivàn.* No ! All together on one head there cannot  
So many evils fall : I don't believe it.  
No ! Give here the sheets.

[*Godunòff gives him the letters. He looks into them for some time, lets them fall, and stands motionless.*

*Enter Stòlneek, who whispers in the ear of Bèlski.*

*Bèlski.*

Great Tzar ! the Anchorite

Whom thou didst send for hath arrived.

*Ivàn* (shuddering).

Admit him.

Go all away : I 'd be with him alone.

[*Exeunt.*

*Ivàn* (alone). Almighty God ! take darkness from my mind.

[*He remains lost in thought. After some seconds the Anchorite enters. Ivàn rises, and bends down his head before him.*

Bless me, my father !



*Anchorite (blessing him).* In the name of God  
The Father, and the Son, and Holy Ghost.

*Ivàn (sitting down).* I have heard much of thee.  
Thou long hast lived  
A solitary life. Within thy cell  
To worldly vanity thou hast shut off  
All access to thy sight and hearing. God  
To men like thee a second sight hath given,  
Marvellous, and from their lips truth speaks.

*Anchorite.* E'en so, my son; there are i' th' Book  
of Martyrs  
Examples of it; but from such men I  
Am far removed.

*Ivàn.* Hast thou long ta'en the vows?

*Anchorite.* In the same year that thou didst conquer,  
Tzar,  
Kazàn; but from that time how many years  
Have passed I know not.

*Ivàn.* Thirty years ago;  
And from that very time thou hast shut out  
The world from thee?

*Anchorite.* To-day I see it  
Again for the first time. I have been brought  
By force here from my cell wrought out  
Under the ground.

*Ivàn.* Forgive me, holy father,  
That I disturbed thy solitude and prayers;

But I had need of counsel from thee. Say,  
Direct me, what must I do to ward off  
Ruin from the whole country and the throne?

*Anchorite.* Ruin! What ruin?

*Ivàn.* Dost thou not know, then?

*Anchorite.* I know not, my son; news reach me not.

*Ivàn.* Father,

God for my sins chastiseth me. He giveth  
Victory o'er me to the King; the Khan  
Marches his hordes on Moscow; the Nogàys  
And Tcheremées are rising in revolt.  
What should I do?

*Anchorite.* Great are the changes that  
Since then have come to pass. Then terrible  
Wast thou unto thy foes. Thou stoodest high;  
None dared to rise against thee; we, the sign  
Of which we at thy birth were witnesses,  
Have oft remembered: in the very hour  
When thou wast born, thunder was heard in heaven,  
And all day rumbled, while the sun still shone;  
And thus it was all Russia through; and many  
A hermit came from foreign lands to bless  
Thy cradle, and predict to thee thy greatness.

*Ivàn.* E'en so, my father. And long God showed  
to me

His mercy; but He now His right hand hath  
Withdrawn from me. My throne is tottering;

On all sides enemies do straiten me.

*Anchorite.* Send out thy leaders 'gainst them ; Way-  
wodes thou

Hast got enough. They are well used for thee  
The heathen to subject.

*Ivàn.* My holy father,  
The leaders whom thou speakest of are gone.

*Anchorite.* Not one left yet ? Ah ! where is Gorbàti.  
—Shoul'ski,

Prince Alexander Borisovitch, who  
Defeated on the Volga Prince Yapantchà ?

*Ivàn.* He did betray me, and was punished.

*Anchorite.* What !  
Gorbàti ? He a faithful servant was  
To thee. But where's Prince Riàpolàffski, he  
Who gained so many wide-famed victories  
Over the Khan ?

*Ivàn.* Punished.

*Anchorite.* But then Feddoff,  
Thine Equery, who i' th' plains of Rezàn,  
Broke up the hordes, and captive took Mamàia,  
The Tzarèvitch ?

*Ivàn.* I killed him, for he would  
Have stolen my throne from me.

*Anchorite.* O Tzar ! I hear not  
The ring of truth in what thou speakest. All  
These men did serve thee faithfully. I knew

Them all. But still there did remain to thee  
The Boyar Prince Michael Vorotinski.  
When that we took Kazàn, he was the first  
To plant the Cross upon the hostile wall.  
The foe well knew him.

*Ivàn.* He died upon the rack.

*Anchorite.* Prince Vorotinski? Tzar! Where, then,  
is Pronski,

Prince Turutài, who in a wide-famed fight,  
Under the walls of Pskoff, routed well  
The Lithuanians?

*Ivàn.* Drowned.

*Anchorite.* God's mercy keep thee!.....

But Kouÿrbski, Prince Andrew Michàilovitch,  
The sharer of thy exploits in the days,  
The good old days of the Kazàn?

*Ivàn.* Ask not

About him. He cast me off—betrayed me,  
And to the foe went into Lithuania.

*Anchorite.* In the good times, I well remember me,  
Men loved thee; none did flee from thee; they crowded  
From distant lands to serve with thee. But where  
Is Prince Stcherbàti, Stcheniàteff? Where is  
Oboleùski?

*Ivàn.* My father, name them not;  
They' re gone.

*Anchorite.* But Kàsheen? Bùtourleen? Moròsoff?  
Serèbrani?

*Ivàn.* All punished.

*Anchorite.*

What? T' th' last?

*Ivàn.* All, father, all.

*Anchorite.*

All perished by thee?

*Ivàn.*

All.

[A silence.]

I do repent, my father. I've not long  
To live. I know that I must die; the time  
Already is appointed me.

*Anchorite.*

Who to thee

Hath a time appointed?

*Ivàn.*

Ask me not, father,

Ask not; but teach me how to save my kingdom.

*Anchorite.* If thou wert not both weak and sickly, I  
Should say to thee, Tzar rise! and lead to war,  
In a sacred cause, thy troops, thyself. But  
Sickness bows thee. I in thee recall not  
The warrior of Kazàn; thine armies  
Thou must hand over to another, one  
Whose name alone all Russia would inspire.  
Thy son Ivàn must now be warrior grown:  
Send him.

*Ivàn (rising quickly).* Monk! didst thou name  
him but to jeer me?

Thou dardest name Ivàn? I'll have thy tongue  
Torn out!

*Anchorite.* Thine anger, Tzar, no terrors hath  
For me; although I understand it not:

I have for long awaited death, my son.

*Ivàn (sitting down).* Forgive me, holy father;  
thou 'lt forgive me!

But hast thou really nothing heard? Have really  
No tidings pierced unto thy dwelling?

*Anchorite.*

Unto

This day the door of that my dwelling hath  
Been closed up; into the dumb vault there pierced,  
Alone, the deadened wail of storms from God,  
And the weak tinkling of the holy bells.

*Ivàn.* My father, I cannot thy counsel follow:  
My son Ivàn is dead!

*Anchorite.*

Who now succeeds thee?

*Ivàn.* My second son Feòdor; but in mind  
And body is he weak. Useless to think  
Of getting aid or energy from him.

*Anchorite.* Then, of thy God must thou ask aid.

*Ivàn.*

And thou

No more instructions, none, hast got for me?

*Anchorite.* Tzar, bid them lead me back unto my cell.

*Ivàn (rising).* Pray for me, holy father!

*Anchorite.*

May the peace

Of God all-merciful be on thy conscience!

*Ivàn (conducts the Anchorite, and opening the door  
speaks to those without).* Lead back the holy  
father to his dwelling.

Ye all may enter now.

*Feddor and the Boyars enter.*

*Ivàn (sitting down, and speaking after a moment's silence).*

*Mstislàffski ! Bèlski !*

Zachàrin ! Godunòff ! Kiss ye the Cross  
That ye will Feddor serve to death ; and to  
The last drop of your blood. Thou, Feddor, trust  
All four of them. Nothing begin without  
Their counsel. If it please to God that Prince  
Ivàn Petròvitch Shouïski do at Pskoff  
Keep whole and sound, he'll be to thee a fifth ;  
To them do I bequeath, with thee together,  
To rule o'er Russia !

*[Hands to them the Cross on his breast.*

*Kiss this Cross.*

*Mstislàffski, Zachàrin, Bèlski, and Godunoff (putting  
their lips to the Cross).*

*O Tzar,*

*We kiss it.*

*Ivàn.* Send Envoys this very night  
To Lithuania, and a certain peace,  
Cost what it may, make with Bathòry, though  
It be but for a time. " I do salute  
My well-belovèd brother, King Stéphàn."  
And write him out his titles all in full ;  
Name him, in closing, Sovereign of Livonia  
'Tis thus he wills, " I do salute my well-  
Belovèd brother as the Sovereign of  
Livonian lands, and I do pray that he

Would leave to me the single town of Youreff,  
And the remaining ones shall all be his."

I give up unto him the following towns—

Velisj, Ousviât, Ozèristcha, and Pàlotsk,  
Izbòrsk, Sebèsj, Xolm, Zàvolcha, Ostròff,  
Gdoff, Nèvel, Lùki, Kràsni, and the rest,  
All the towns he hath taken from us, all.

[*Murmurs among the Boyars.*

*Zachàrin.* What say 'st thou, Tzar? A shame to us  
to make

Conditions such as these!

*Matislàffski.*

O Tzar! command us

In person all t' th' fight against Bathòry,

But bid us not disgrace ourselves!

*Bèlski.*

If thou,

O Tzar, permit, we're ready here to offer up

All that we have of fortune.

*All the Boyars (speaking together).* We will all  
Lay down our lives for thee; we'll sell our all;  
We'll pledge our lands; we'll hold out unto death;  
We'll shed our blood to the last drop; we'll die  
To the last man. But bid us not surrender  
Our Russian towns that dear are to our hearts.

*Ivàn.* Be still! Am I, then, glad of it? It cannot  
Be otherwise. Have ye forgotten that  
The Khan's already under Moscow? that  
The Tcheremées have risen? that the Swedes



Threaten to march on Nòvgorod ?

*Zachàrin.*

But, Tzar,

Pskoff still is ours. Until it do surrender,  
Bathòry cannot turn his back upon it,  
He 'll go no further. Mutiny and plague,  
The want of money, and the want of food,  
Are all among his troops. Wait yet awhile ;  
Wait yet, and soon the siege he 'll raise ; retire,  
And give up to us all his conquests.

*Ivàn.*

No,

I cannot, cannot wait. The blood-red star  
Doth call me. King Bathòry will still more  
Demand from Feòdor. 'Tis impossible !

*Bèlski.* But, Tzar, thou hearest : famine and revolt  
And plague are 'mong their troops. Can it be  
now—

Now—when by one united firm attack  
We might destroy them—that we must give up  
So much to them of Russian territory ?

*Ivàn.* We could not conquer. Have ye, then, forgotten

That not to him, but me, yon star foretelleth  
Ruin ?

*Zachàrin.* Great Tzar ! if thou indeed must perish,  
Why willest thou that Russia perish with thee ?

*Metislàffski.* Our honour why wouldst thou humiliate ?

*Ivàn (proudly).* When ransoming my sins before  
my death,

I myself humble,—I your sovereign,—  
Then of your honour ye need little think.  
Not one word more! Shouiski! thou by daylight  
Get done a letter for me to Bathòry,  
And Poushkin with his fellows bid, that, with  
The light, they be prepared to start; command them  
To have themselves in all their conferences  
Of humble, mild, and quiet conduct, that  
Abuse and insult they endure without  
A murmur; that they bear with all.

*The Boyars.* No, Tzar, no! That cannot be! Thou  
mayst

Our lives and fortunes do with what thou wilt;  
But at thy will our country's honour lies not.  
No, Tzar! Such instructions not one will sign.

*Ivàn (rising).* So thus ye keep your oath? So thus  
ye mind

The holy writings? On the self-same day  
That I would from my throne descend, why did ye  
All in a body pray me on the throne  
To stay? Or I that day my power took  
Bound to your sufferance? Or no longer I  
Am that same Tzar, given by God to you,  
Whom ye did choose again? Or ye have but  
One answer to me, to obey? Or, may be,

So few days now are left to me to live,  
That to obey me is not worth your while?  
Ye breakers of your oaths! my time's not come!  
I still am Tzar! Which of ye dares to say  
I am not Tzar? Down all! I' th' dust before me!  
I am your sovereign!.....

[*He totters.*

*Godunoff (holding him up).* The Tzar is ill!  
Send for the doctors!

*Ivàn (held up by Godunoff).* Furnish the Envoys,  
At once, on pain of instant cruel death!  
Bid them put up with all—endure all—all—  
Though 'twere a blow!

[*The Boyars retire.*

Almighty God! Thou seest  
Thine anointed: is he sufficiently  
Humiliated now?

## ACT V.

SCENE I.—*Godunoff's house. Godunoff and his wife are conducting with low bows the Tzarévitch Feodor.*

*Godunoff.* Good bye, Tzarévitch! We are much beholden

For the honour to thee. Vex thee not further :  
Thou seest Cyril's day is come, and with it  
No mischance hath brought. On the contrary,  
To-day the Tzar feels himself better, and  
Good tidings have been sent to us : the Envoys  
In time were turned back by the messenger  
The Tzar sent after them. A flood prevents  
The Khan from crossing the Oka ; and the King  
Hath raised the siege of Pskoff. This news and others  
Have done the Tzar much good. Wait yet awhile,  
And he will soon be well again.

*María Godunova.* Tzarévitch,  
Whither so fast? Thou hast not tasted yet  
The poor collation I had ready for thee.

*Feodor.* Pardon me, sister-in-law. Though to-day  
My father's health is better, still there is  
Upon my heart a something that depresses.  
Take thou not, brother-in-law, thy word back ;

All my hopes are in thee ; if aught should happen,  
As God forbid, I shall be lost as in  
A wood. Then thou must show me what to do.

*Godunoff*. Tzarévitch, I am thy servant, thy faithful  
Thrall ; but if aught happen, look thou well to it.  
They will not let me serve thee ; all will then  
Strive to blacken me.

*Feddor*. But I will not believe them ;  
My father bade me listen to thee, and  
Rely on thee will I in all. Farewell,  
Boris ! Farewell, good sister-in-law !  
I pray you now give not yourselves the trouble.

[*Exit, accompanied by Godunoff.*]

*Maria (alone)*. I would to God this day might  
sooner pass !  
Whate'er my husband says, he is himself  
Not calm. I dreamt the live-long night of jewels,  
And saw a rounded pearl, and with his hands  
Rummaged the Tzar among them, and admiring  
The gems strewed round. Such dreams are of ill luck,  
And mean no good.

[*She stands thinking.*]

*Godunoff (returns and looks at her)*. Maria, what  
ails thee ?

*Maria*. Forgive me. This day hath terrors for me !  
The Wizards.....

*Godunoff*. The Wizards lied ; the Tzar is

More alert. I myself saw him.

*Maria.*

However,

If—if 'twere the Wizards lied not ?

*Godunoff* (*lowering his voice*). In case

Aught happened—Say, Maria—we 're alone—

Wouldst thou then, really !.....

*Maria.*

No, my good Lord, no !

'Tis not for him, it is for thee I fear.

*Godunoff.* How ? Fear for me ?

*Maria.*

Why, did not Feëdor say

That, if aught happened, he would know not how

To act ? That thou must then in all direct him ?

Boris ! what if to-day on thee should fall

The weight of the entire kingdom ? If,

For revolts, for the famine, for the war,

For all, for all before the country thou

Must answer give ?

*Godunoff.*

If that should really happen

Which thou dost fear, with no weak hand would I

Then take the reins. It is not power that

I fear : I feel within me strength enough,

In her year of heaviest misfortune,

Russia to uphold. No, I do fear lest

The power that may fall unto my share

Be not an ample one. Whoever be

Protector of the kingdom, can but be

The shadow of the Tzar ; against the envy

Of others must he struggle, and the thought  
That's his he never can embody in  
An act self-covenanted, true to its aim,  
Perfect as when conceived, as I had done  
Had I been born upon the throne, and not  
A subject.

*Marìa.* God be thanked that we are not  
Of birth illustrious. Fearful th' account  
That Kings must render !

*Godunòff.* And more fearful still  
Th' account *this* Tzar must give ! But thou for naught  
Alarm'st thyself. His sickness leaves him now,  
And many years, may be, shall pass before  
He have to render his account.

*Marìa.* Thou art  
Thyself uneasy.

*Godunòff.* I'm at ease : all goes on  
For the best. The Wizards lied. Leave me now  
*Marìa* ; go to thy room ; I've business.

*[Exit Marìa. Godunòff opens a side-door,  
and lets in two shackled Wizards. He  
then sits down, and looks at them intently  
in silence.]*

*Godunòff (in a marked tone).* To-day is Cyril's day,  
th' eighteenth of March.

*1st Wizard.* 'Tis so, my Lord.

*Godunòff.* The Tzar to-day is better.

*2nd Wizard.* God have him in His keeping!

*Godunoff.*

You, it seems,

Were then mistaken when you named to him

This day as that on which he'd die?

*1st Wizard.*

What we

Read in the stars, that did we say.

*Godunoff.*

Why, then,

So soon hath sickness left him?

*1st Wizard.*

We know not;

But a day is long, and the sun hath not

Yet set.

[*A silence.*

*Godunoff.* And ye divined for me, as I

Did bid you?

*1st Wizard (looking round him).* We've divined,  
my Lord!

*Godunoff.*

Ye may

Speak openly: here none can hear us. What

Have ye learned?

*1st Wizard.*

The constellations mingle

Thy destinies with those of crownèd Tzars;

But three stars are there that eclipse the while

Thy greatness. One of them will soon go out.

*Godunoff.* Speak clearer!

*1st Wizard.*

Wider and brighter grows

thy path

The more it lengthens.



*Godunoff.* Whither does it lead?

*2nd Wizard.* To what thy soul so long hath thirsted  
for,

That which thou durst not to thyself confess—  
That shall be.

*Godunoff.* Wizards! tell me plainly what  
Awaits me in the future?

*Both Wizards (falling on their knees).* When thou  
sittest

Upon the throne a Tzar, remember thee,  
O Boyar, of thy thralls!

*Godunoff (rising).* Are ye, then, mad?

*1st Wizard.* 'Twas so when we divined.

*Godunoff.* Hush! Silence! Hush!  
[*Goes to the doors, examines them, and stands  
before the Wizards.*]

Sorcerers! could I believe in that  
With which ye now would mystify me, 'twere  
Better for you that ye were yet unborn!

*1st Wizard.* We speak what we do see. The signs  
of heaven

We have read; moreover we divined in  
Blood and smoke, and alway i' th' foggy vapour  
Saw thee upon the throne, the crown upon thee,  
The royal mantle.....

*Godunoff.* Silence! Silence! When  
Shall that of which ye've spoken happen?

1st Wizard.

When—

We know not.

Godunoff. Have I many years to reign ?

2nd Wizard. Thou 'lt reign but seven years.

Godunoff. If but seven days !

But how shall I to regal power reach ?

1st Wizard. We do not know.

Godunoff. Whom should I fear ?

2nd Wizard. Ask not.

Godunoff. I will know who my chief opponent is.

1st Wizard. His signs are seen but darkly.

Godunoff. Tell me them !

1st Wizard. He's weak, but he is powerful.

2nd Wizard. Himself,

And not himself.

1st Wizard. Innocent towards all men.

2nd Wizard. Foe'to the country, cause of many woes.

1st Wizard. Killed, but alive.

Godunoff. Such words are void of sense !

1st Wizard. 'Twas so when we divined. It is not  
given

To know more unto us.

Godunoff. It is enough for me. You will be led back  
To your prison ; with time I will give orders  
T' enlarge, and to reward you royally,  
But, look ye here ! I do command you, under  
Pain of death, that ye yourselves forget what

Here ye have said to me.

[*Opens the door. Exeunt Wizards.*]

“To what so long my soul hath thirsted for,

That which I durst not to myself confess!”

Yes, it is so! Now do I clearly see

What prize it was that ever shone so brightly.

Now onward, onward, must I step, and turn

Predictions into facts by deeds. Not fate

That bears us up above the crowd; she only

Can put the chance within our hands. A man

Strong in himself doth wait not idly ’till

A miracle shall lift him up aloft.

He helpeth fate himself. The chance is there,

And it is time for me to act!

[*Stamps on the ground.*]

*Enter Steward.*

Send here

One of the doctors of the Tzar.

[*Exit Steward.*]

Seven years!

But seven years! And whether far or near

That day, I may not know. Meanwhile the hours

Pass quickly. Through the madness of Ivàn

All crumbles, and my empire a mere wreck

Will come to me.....“The sun hath not yet set!”

The Wizards said just now... Who knows? Perhaps!...

Let that brute beast but die to-day, to-day

Will my weak-minded brother-in-law give up  
To *me* his power. *I* shall be sovereign !.....

But was it that the Wizards promised ? No !  
They in the crown, the mantle, on the throne,  
I' th' crown and in the mantle, saw me. Thus  
Spake they : " Three stars are there that do  
eclipse

The while thy greatness—three !" Ivàn is one ;  
The other—Feddor the Tzarévitch ; and  
The third—who else, if not Demètri ? Who  
Can that opponent be so powerful,  
Whom I'm to fear, if not the child Demètri ?  
He, he doth bar me ! " Weak, but powerful ;  
Innocent, but guilty ; himself, and not  
Himself." It all doth meet exactly in  
Demètri ! But what meaning, then, in this :  
" Killed, but alive ?" How wildly in my ear  
Resound the ominous and riddling words,  
" Killed, but alive !" By whom will he be killed ?  
It cannot be ! But if, in truth, the arm  
To lift against him any did resolve,  
Then how to bring the slain to life again ?  
I seem to look into a dark abyss ;  
Mine eyes are dim, and tangled are my thoughts.....  
Enough ! Away with ye, unfruitful guesses !  
Alive or killed, his fate is in the future,  
And dear to me the passing instant now !

*Enter Steward.*

*Steward.* Boyar, the doctor of the Tzar is come.

*Godunoff.* Let him come in.

*Enter Jacòbi.*

Romàn Eliazàritch,

I sent for thee to be informed exactly

How far the Tzar to-day is better. May we

Hope that all danger now is passed for him ?

*Jacòbi.* His illness, Boyar, is not a simple one ;

His mind as well as body suffers. Used,

E'en from his youth, that all should bend before

His sovereign will, this last humiliation

Was too much. But now he's heartened

And bettered by good tidings. And he will be

Well if we can succeed in keeping him

From all excitement.

*Godunoff.* But if, which God forbid, he should for  
aught

Excite himself ?

*Jacòbi.* Then could we answer not

For anything. The vessels which the blood

Do carry from and back unto the heart

Are so much strained, that any slight emotion

At once may burst them.

*Godunoff.* How, then, to prevent  
That he be agitated ?

*Jacòbi.* All occasion

To vex and to excite must be avoided,  
Hap what may : let him but see and listen to  
Whatever may divert.

*Godunoff.* When thou didst leave,  
How was he ?

*Jacobi.* After his bath he laid him  
Down to sleep, but gave to the Butler orders  
To carry meanwhile all the treasures from  
The great store out into a neighbouring room,  
That, on awaking, he might look them over.  
In attendance on him there remained  
My colleague, Richard Elms.

*Godunoff.* These same conditions  
For the recovery of the Tzar are hard ones  
To execute : you know his humour well.

*Jacobi.* The Boyar Bèlski, to withdraw his mind  
From cares and business, hath got together  
A mob of Fools and of Buffoons. Th' idea  
Is not a bad one. Let this day be passed  
In games and laughter.

*Godunoff (rising).* We will try to follow  
All thine instructions.

*Jacobi.* Craving your pardon,  
Boyar.

[*Exit. Godunoff stamps on the ground.*

*Enter Steward.*

*Godunoff.* Is Beetiagoffski here ?

*Steward.* He is,  
My Lord.

*Godunoff.* Then send him hither.

[*The Steward goes out, and at once admits  
Beetiagoffski.*

What is doing

Among the people?

*Beetiagoffski.* God be praised!

*Godunoff.* Are they  
'Gainst Shouïski and 'gainst Bèlski to the needful  
Pitch worked up?

*Beetiagoffski.* To tearing them.

*Godunoff.* They 'll rise, then,  
Upon them when we will?

*Beetiagoffski.* If not before.

*Godunoff.* Hold thou thyself in readiness to witness  
Before the Tzar that the Nagòis a riot  
Were now preparing.

*Beetiagoffski.* That I can.

*Godunoff.* And further,  
To take thy oath that thou, with thine own ears,  
Hast heard how they did orders give their thralls  
To go among the people.

*Beetiagoffski.* Swear! why not?

*Godunoff.* Keep thee where I can lay my hands on  
thee  
To-day; maybe that I shall want thee; now

Begone !

[*Exit Beetiagòffski.*

*Godunòff (alone).* I much mistake or else there shall  
Be much decided ere this day be done.

[*Exit.*

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SCENE II.—*A richly-furnished room in the Palace.*

*Servants are carrying and setting out a number of  
valuable utensils and ornaments. The Steward and  
Butler are looking after them.*

*Steward (to Servants).* Come, look alive there ! are  
ye ready yet ?

The Tzar this moment will be up.

*Butler (to Steward).* Say, prithee,

For what good reason will he now look over

All these his articles of price ?

*Steward.* They say

That he will send rich gifts unto his bride

Beyond the sea.

*Butler.* How ? Has he not given up

The thought of marrying her ?

*Steward.* Oh, yes,

It was given up, but now to-day, it seems,

Again he's taken to it. See'st thou not

He feels himself much easier to-day ?



*Butler.* Well, 'tis his affair. Sad for the Tzaritza,  
Maria Feëdrovna ! the kind Tzaritza !

*Steward (looking out of the window).* Ah ! there's a  
crowd ! What swarms are crawling there !

*Butler.* Yes, several days the halls have all been  
crowded :

They come for news of the Tzar's health.

*Steward.* Thank God,  
The Wizards clearly were at fault ! The day  
Of Cyril now is come, and yet the Tzar  
Is better.

[*To the Servants.*

Ho, there ! are ye ready yet ?

*Butler (looking at his list).* Nothing forgot !

*Steward (to Servants).* Now, then, be off with ye !

[*Exeunt Servants.*

See, here they are, well classed, each in its row,  
But little wanting. All the brightest stones,  
And gold, and silk, and rich brocades. The room  
Is all aflame with them.

*Butler.* Hush ! Some one comes !

*Steward.* Oh, Lord, perhaps the Tzar !

*Enter Bèlski.*

*Butler.* No, it is Bèlski.

*Bèlski.* Have ye got all ready here ?

*Steward.* All, my Lord.

*Bèlski.* The Tzar will come directly. Look ye that

He be with all content ; that he in us  
No cause do find to vex him. Both his doctors  
Say, for God's sake keep to-day from him all  
Care of anger.

[*Laughing is heard.*

Who is laughing there ?

*Enter Fool. A crowd of Buffoons in strange costumes follow him, carrying rebecs, bag-pipes, pans, and different sounding utensils.*

*Fool (to Bèlski).*

Noncle

Bogdàn ! I've brought thee dance and song. Then,  
listen !

*Buffoons (dancing).*

Hoy ! burn, burn, burn !

Make fast thou hag, the wicket !

Pull the goat's horn, and nick it !

Hoy ! burn, burn, burn !

Three legs for hags to trick it !

*Fool.* Well, now, how likes it thee ?

*Bèlski.*

'Tis passable.

Look ye now, Masks ! Largesse will not be stinted.  
Before the Tzar twist ye your heels o'erhead !  
Now for awhile get ye to yonder room,  
And hide ye there. When I shall call out,  
*Knaves !*

In, all of ye, and rattle out the song  
Your liveliest.

*[The Buffoons cross the stage and go through a side door.]*

*Bèlski (to Fool).* Stand thou the whole time by  
The Tzar ; keep watch upon his countenance ;  
And if he but begin to frown, throw in  
What jest thou hast most laughable.

*Fool.* Ah ! yes,  
Throw in ! Wilt thou not try that throw thyself ?  
And he will throw thee out of window for 't !

*[The door opens.]*

*Bèlski.* He comes ! Go jest with him !

*Ivàn is carried in, in an arm-chair. He wears a dressing-gown ; his countenance shows the exhaustion of illness, but has a triumphant expression. The chair is placed in the middle of the room, and before it is put a small three-legged table. After Ivàn enter Godunòff, Mstislàffski, Shouïski, and the other Boyars, with the exception of Zachàrin.)*

*Ivàn (sitting in the arm-chair, to Godunòff).* To-day  
we cannot

Again receive the Envoy of the Queen.  
Let him to-morrow, without sword or orders,  
Come to take leave of us. In our bedchamber  
We will receive him simply. Now, let's see  
What we can to our Sister Elizabeth

Assign in gift, and what unto her Niece,  
Our bride.

*Bèlski.* From Persia here are fabrics, Tzar,  
A choice of them ; it may be some will please  
The Queen.

*Ivàn.* No, she's not one that thou canst catch  
With rags. Peèsemski writes to us from London,  
That in the woods she likes to hunt the deer,  
Is fond of hawking, and the fight of beasts.  
We will a gift provide unto her taste.  
Give me those trappings furbished with turquoise,  
And interset with pearl ; and put up also  
That housing there, the one that's set with gems.

*[The objects he asks for are handed to Ivàn.  
He examines them, and signs to put them  
away.]*

We'll send her also two live bears in chains  
Of gold, and with them falcons six of breed  
Siberian. Let our sister think of us  
When she diverts herself. T' th' Lady Hastings—  
That's another matter. Dresses we'll find  
For her. Hand me the rings and necklaces.

*[Various objects of jewellery are handed to  
Ivàn. He takes them up, and examines  
them one after another.]*

This necklace here of diamonds and sapphires,  
With rubies mixed, we'll send to the Princess.

A dark gem is the sapphire, and when one  
Doth gaze into its depth, it calms the soul  
And drives away all grief ; the ruby watches  
O'er the faith of women, therefore is its hue  
A blood-red colour. Of the rings send this  
To her ; it is the costliest of all :  
'Tis called the stone *Balas* ; 'twas brought to us  
From India, and is not easily  
Obtained, because the fear-inspiring beasts,  
The griffons, there do flee from it. The bite  
Of snakes is healed by it. Let, then, our bride  
Upon her finger wear it for our love :  
As for the tissues, I'm not learned in them ;  
Ask the Tzaritza Mária about them ;  
Old women are well up in that. Hah ! likes it  
Th' Tzaritza, that we send to the Princess ?

*Fool.* Ho, daddy Tzar !

*Ivàn.*

What ?

*Fool.*

When hast thou a mind

To marry thee ?

*Ivàn.*

What's that to thee ?

*Fool.*

A whim.

[*Pointing to Michael Nagòì.*

I want to do a piece of service to  
Our Mishka there : the day of the Nagòis  
I' th' palace now is over, so I want  
To get up this for them.

*[Takes his cap, and goes round with it as if begging for alms.]*

*Ivàn.* What dost thou, Fool?

*Fool.* I'm gathering threads, Tzar, round about the world,

To make a shirt up for Nagdi ; \* he 'll want it !

*Ivàn.* Ha, ha ! A rare fool thou, a very fool !

But, fear not, the Nagdis I 'll find in clothes.

*[To the Nagdis.]*

Ye there ! If ye do serve me well, I 'll not  
Abandon you.

*[Looking at the treasures]*

My chests, thank God, have something  
In them still ; I have got the wherewithal  
For those whom I 'd reward ; a good time yet  
'Twill last me.

*[Cries heard on the square before the Palace.]*

Hah ! What cries are those ?

*Godunòff.*

The people

Are noisy, Tzar ; they are rejoicing that  
Thy health 's restored to thee.

*Ivàn.* Let them rejoice ! Roll out to them, upon  
The open square, a hundred casks of mead  
And wine. To-morrow morning there shall be  
Fresh fun for them. The Wizards and Astrologers,  
Who lyingly foretold my death to-day,

\* The word "nagdi" in Russian means "naked."

Shall roasted be on pyres. Go, Boris,  
And tell them of their punishment, then come  
And let me know the faces that they make.

[Exit Godunoff.]

Hah ! they would try to jest with me ! They wished  
To frighten with their Cyril's day ! No man  
Can know the day of death beforehand. None !  
You ! Do you hear ?

*Shouiski.*

We hear, O Tzar !

*Ivan.*

Then, why

Your mouths shut ? Is it like that any man  
Can say beforehand, *so* long I 've to live ?  
Or *thus* my life must end ?

*Mstislaffski.*

None can, great Tzar !

*Ivan.* Well, well, what then ? Why are your mouths  
shut, ah ?

*Shouiski.* Great Tzar ! that thou mayst keep in  
health we pray

To God both day and night.

*Mstislaffski.*

May the Lord heal thee,

And quickly of His grace !

*Ivan.*

Am I not, then,

Yet healed ? What dost thou mean ? Am I, then, ill ?  
The sun is on the wane, and I feel heartier  
Than in the morning. I have many years  
Of life before me yet, enough to build up  
Anew my kingdom. In my dying hour,

When by my carcass, with the Holy Senate,  
The Metropolitan shall pray, I'll say to 'em,  
Weep not, I'm comforted ; for I can hand  
An empire free of troubles to my son,  
Thus will I go unto my God.

*[Belski makes a sign to the Fool, who has been  
examining different articles on the table.  
The Fool takes up a box with chessmen, and  
carries it to Ivàn.]*

*Fool.* Noncle Tzar ! See here, what poppets !

*Ivàn (to the Boyars).* To death for lies the Wizards  
have I sentenced ;

Say, is not this my sentence just ?

*The Boyars.* Just, Tzar !

*Ivàn.* Then, if 'tis just, why are ye tongue-tied ?

*The Boyars.* Great Tzar ! forgive. We know not  
what to say.

*Ivàn.* Ye know not ? So, to death, then, I've devoted  
Men that are innocent ? So, then, the Wizards  
Have not lied ?

*The Boyars.* They've lied, Tzar ! They have lied !  
The torment meets the fault. For guilt like theirs  
Such death as theirs is little.

*Ivàn.* Hah ! at last !  
To ope their mouths they are afeared. Words from  
them  
Must be drawn out with pincers.

*[A silence.]*



What d'ye mean

By whispering there ?

*Shouïski.*

No, Tzar, we did not whisper.

*Ivàn.* Ye seem to wait to-day for something ? Ah !

What are ye waiting for ?

*Fool.*

O noncle Tzar !

Give but a look t' th' poppets here !

*Ivàn.*

What's in 't ?

*Bèlski.* A game of chess, O Tzar, sent as a present  
B' th' Tzar of Persia to thee.

*Fool (looking over the figures).* Here are dresses !

*Bèlski (taking a board from the table).* And here's  
the board for them.

*Ivàn.* Here, give them me ! (*examines the chessmen*).  
'Tis long since I have played a game. Sit down,  
Bogdàn ; let's see who's stronger.

[*Servants bring candles. Ivàn places his men.*

*Bèlski sits opposite him, and also places his  
men.*

*Fool (to Ivàn, pointing to the chessmen).* To the life,  
T' th' very life thy Boyars ! Now, look here,  
Set those, the living ones, aside, and place  
I' th' Council these. Affairs will not go worse,  
And these will not want feeding.

*Ivàn.*

Ha, ha, ha !

The clown's but half a fool to-day.

[*He moves a pawn. The game begins. All  
stand round the Tzar's chair, and look on.*

*Fool.* Or, in their stead, make thou of me a Boyar !  
I'll seat me in the Council all alone,  
And disaccord will there be none with me.  
Or, noncle, send me to Lithuania  
As Envoy to congratulate the King.

*Ivàn.* On what, Fool ?

*Fool.* Ah ! on breaking 'gainst the wall  
Of Pskoff his head.

*Ivàn.* 'Twould not be bad to send thee ;  
Garàbourda he sent me with his glove ;  
I take it, he'll think twice now ere he march  
On Nòvgorod.

*Shoùiski.* Not he !

*Ivàn.* The Diet hath  
Refused the King's supplies. I' faith, it moves  
To laughter ! To a sovereign his subjects  
Won't e'en give money.

*Fool.* 'Tis not so with us :  
Aught wanted—here man, there man—and 'tis got !

*Bèlski (advancing his queen).* Check, Tzar !

*Ivàn (covering with his bishop).* Check to thy queen !

*Shoùiski (smiling to Bèlski).* What hast thou gained ?  
The queen is lost !

*Ivàn.* 'Tis like it !

*Bèlski.* Yes, 'tis so ;  
The queen is lost !

*Ivàn.* The game goes well for us :

We have not quite forgotten yet to play ;  
Our sickness yet hath not deprived us of  
All power of thinking. Cyril's day ! Hah ! 'twas  
A rare device ! The cursèd dogs ! But whither  
Hath Boris betaken him ? Why comes he not  
To bring their answer ?

*[Bèlski takes the Tzar's bishop. Ivàn wishes  
to take his queen with his own king, and  
drops the latter piece on the ground.]*

*Fool (running to pick it up).* Oh, oh, oh ! The Tzar  
Hath tumbled !

*Ivàn (bursting out).* Fool ! take heed ! Thy place  
know, sirrah !

*[To Bèlski.]*

Thy move !

*[The game continues. Godunòff appears in  
the doorway.]*

*Godunòff (speaking low, and pointing out Ivàn to  
one of the Boyars who stands behind the others).*

How is he now ?

*Boyar (low to Godunòff).* His mood is wrathful :  
Already twice his anger hath been roused.

*[Godunòff approaches and stands opposite Ivàn.]*

*Ivàn (raising his head).* Thou here ! Well, what ?

Thou 'st seen the conjurors ?

What was their answer ? Why art thou tongue-tied ?  
Canst thou not speak ?

*Godunoff.*

Hem, Tzar !

*Ivàn.*

Why look'st thou so

On me ?

*[Steps back from Godunoff.*

How darest thou look thus ?

*Godunoff.*

Great Tzar !

The Wizards bade me say to thee, for answer,  
That true their science is.

*Ivàn.*

How ?

*Godunoff.*

That they cannot

Be in error, and that—not over yet

Is Cyril's day !

*Ivàn (rises and totters).* Not over ? Cyril's day ?

And thou dost dare—

Thou darest—villain !—to my face—thou—thou—

I've understood thy look ! To kill me thou—

To kill me thou art come ! Traitor ! Ho, deathsmen !

Feodor ! Son ! No trust in him ! A thief !

No trust in him. Ah !

*[Falls backward on the floor.**Shoûiski (runs to him and holds up his head).* God !

but he's going !

*Bèlski.* Call in the doctors ! send for them at once !*Ivàn (opening his eyes).* A confessor !*Bèlski.*

Run for a priest there, knaves !

Run quickly ! What ho there, knaves ! What ho !

*[The Buffoons rush in, singing, dancing, and whistling.*

*Buffoons.*

Hoy ! burn, burn, burn !

Pull the goat's horn and nick it !

*The Boyars.* What's this ? What means it ? Back,  
as ye fear God !

The Tzar is dying !

*Mstislàffski.* Send for the doctors !

*[Ivàn expires. Several Boyars rush out of  
the room. The Buffoons run off.]*

*Enter Elms and Jacòbi.*

*Jacòbi.* Where is the Tzar ?

*Bèlski (pointing to the body).* He's there !

*Jacòbi (bending down and feeling Ivàn's pulse).* The  
pulse beats not.

*Elms (taking the other hand).* No, it is still !

*Jacòbi.* The heart beats not.

*Elms.* Quite dead !

*Jacòbi.* Life is over !

*Godunòff,* He's gone !

*[Opens the window and cries to those on the  
square.*

People of Moscow !

The Tzar Ivàn Vasilevitch is dead !

*[A confused noise of talking on the square.*

*Godunòff leaves the room. The Boyars sur-  
round Ivàn, and gaze at him in silence.*

*Enter Zachàrin : he stops before the body.*

*Zachàrin.* 'Tis over! There thou art, then, Tzar

*Ivàn,*

Before whom Russia hath trembled so long.

Powerless, helpless dost thou lie there

Without movement, and in the midst of all

Thy treasures poor! What do we stand and wait for,

Boysars? Should *he* be in the dust before us,

Before whom we have in the dust been lying

For half a century? Or is it now

Fearful for ye to touch him? Fear ye not!

He'll ope his eyes no more! That feeble hand

Will grasp no more the iron staff, nor those

Cold lips deal punishment around.

*[They take up Ivàn, place him on a bench,  
make up a pillow for him, and cover him  
with brocade.]*

*Feòdor, the Tzarìtza, and the Tzarèvna Ireèna enter  
hastily.*

*Feòdor (rushing up to the corpse).* O Tzar!

My father!

*Tzarìtza.* O God, have mercy on us!

*Ireèna.* O God!

*[All three weep loudly. The cries on the square  
increase.]*

*Enter the Chief of the Strelitzes.*

*Chief (to Feòdor).* Great Tzar! th' people are  
rioting!

They 're climbing up the steps !

*Feòdor (frightened).* What do they want ?

*Chief.* Their cry is that Shoùiski and Bèlski have  
Poisoned the Tzar !

*The Centurion of the Strelitzes rushes in.*

*Centurion.* The people, Tzar, have seized  
Upon a cannon ! They 'll have down the palace !

*Bèlski (to Feòdor).* Give orders to fire upon  
them !

*Feòdor.* Where is  
My brother-in-law ? Boris ! Boris ! What  
Must I do ?

*Enter Godunòff.*

*Godunòff (solemnly to Feòdor, falling on his knees).*  
O mighty Tzar !

*Feòdor (rushing to him).* Ah ! thou 'rt there  
At last !

*[Cries on the square, among which are to be  
heard the names of Shoùiski and Bèlski.]*

*Shoùiski (to Feòdor).* Decide, O Tzar !

*Feòdor (pointing to Godunòff).* There is the one  
Now to decide. To him I do entrust  
From this instant all my power.

*Godunòff (after saluting Feòdor goes to the window).*

People of  
Moscow ! Feòdor Ivànitch, by th' will

Of God Grand Duke and Tzar of all the Russias,  
Hath ordered to inform you that from sickness  
The Tzar Ivàn hath died. No one is guilty  
Of his death. But Shoùiski and Bèlski long  
Have you oppressed ; which knowing, the Tzar  
Feòdor

Doth to a distance out of Moscow banish them.

*[Confused noise on the square.*

*Shoùiski.* Boris Feòdoritch ! What mean 'st ? What  
dost thou ?

*Bèlski.* Why are we banished ?

*Godunòff.*

Ye are free to stay ;

Will 't please ye go upon the stairs ?

*Shoùiski.*

Thou seest

We shall be torn to pieces !

*Bèlski.*

They will tear us

Limb from limb !

*Godunòff.* 'Tis *my* belief.

*[To the Chief of the Strelitzes.*

From Moscow,

Under strong guard, send off these Boyars. When

You reach Pokròff, you will be there informed

Where you must take them.

*[Shoùiski and Bèlski are surrounded by the  
Strelitzes.*

*Zachàrin (to Godunòff).* Boyar, thou art prompt ;

We know not who it was that raised the riot.



*Godunoff*. The Nagòis, and with Mstislàffski.

[*Pointing to Beetiagòffski, who enters well dressed, and bearing an appearance of respectability.*

There stands

The witness of their guilt !

*The Nagòis and Mstislàffski*. What ! He ?

*Beetiagòffski (impudently)*. Yes, I !

*Godunoff (to Mstislàffski)*. Prince, thou hast merited death, but the Tzar

Doth banish thee only to a monastery.

[*To the Nagòis.*

As for ye two, from love to the Tzarìtza,  
He pardons you, and orders you, with her  
And the Tzarèvitch, to depart for Oùglitch.

[*To the Tzarìtza, pointing to Beetiagòffski.*

This man to watch o'er all of ye is ordered.

*Tzarìtza (to Feòdor)*. Trust him not, trust him  
not, Feòdor ! Tzar,

Send us not away !

*Feòdor (to Godunoff)*. May it not be, brother,  
That the Tzarìtza stay ?

*Godunoff*. It will be better  
There for her, great Tzar !

*Zachàrin*. Boyar Godunoff !  
I see thou hast a master's hand in ordering !  
Thou 'st found a place for all. I am the sole one

Forgotten by thee. Say, then, where am I  
To go ? To exile ? To a monastery ?  
To a prison ? Or to my death ?

*Godunoff.*

My father,

The Tzar doth beg that thou wilt stay by him.

*Tzaritza (to Zachàrin).* Oh ! save me ! Save me,  
Boyar ! We are lost !

*Zachàrin.* God grant, Tzaritza, that all be not now  
lost !

An evil seed thou 'st sown, O Boyar Godunoff !

I hope for no good harvest from it ! Thou

[*Turning to the body of Ivàn.*

Tzar Ivàn ! May the good God pardon thee !

May He pardon all of us ! The chastisement

Of self-willed power see ! See that wherefrom

Ruin doth stalk around !

*Feòdor (with tears to the Tzaritza).* Dear, honoured  
lady !

Weep not ! There is no help ! 'Tis plain that so

It must be.

*Godunoff (goes to the window).* People of Moscow,  
the great Tzar

Feòdor Ivànovitch doth pardon you !

Go all of ye, and pray for the repose

Of the soul of Tzar Ivàn, and to-morrow,

By morning, through all Moscow shall be given

Out to you full supplies of bread and wine.

[*Cries on the square.*

Long live the Tzar, Feëdor Ivanòvitch !

Long life unto the Boyar Godunòff !

[*Feëdor throws himself sobbing on the neck  
of Godunòff. They stand embracing each  
other.*

THE END.







